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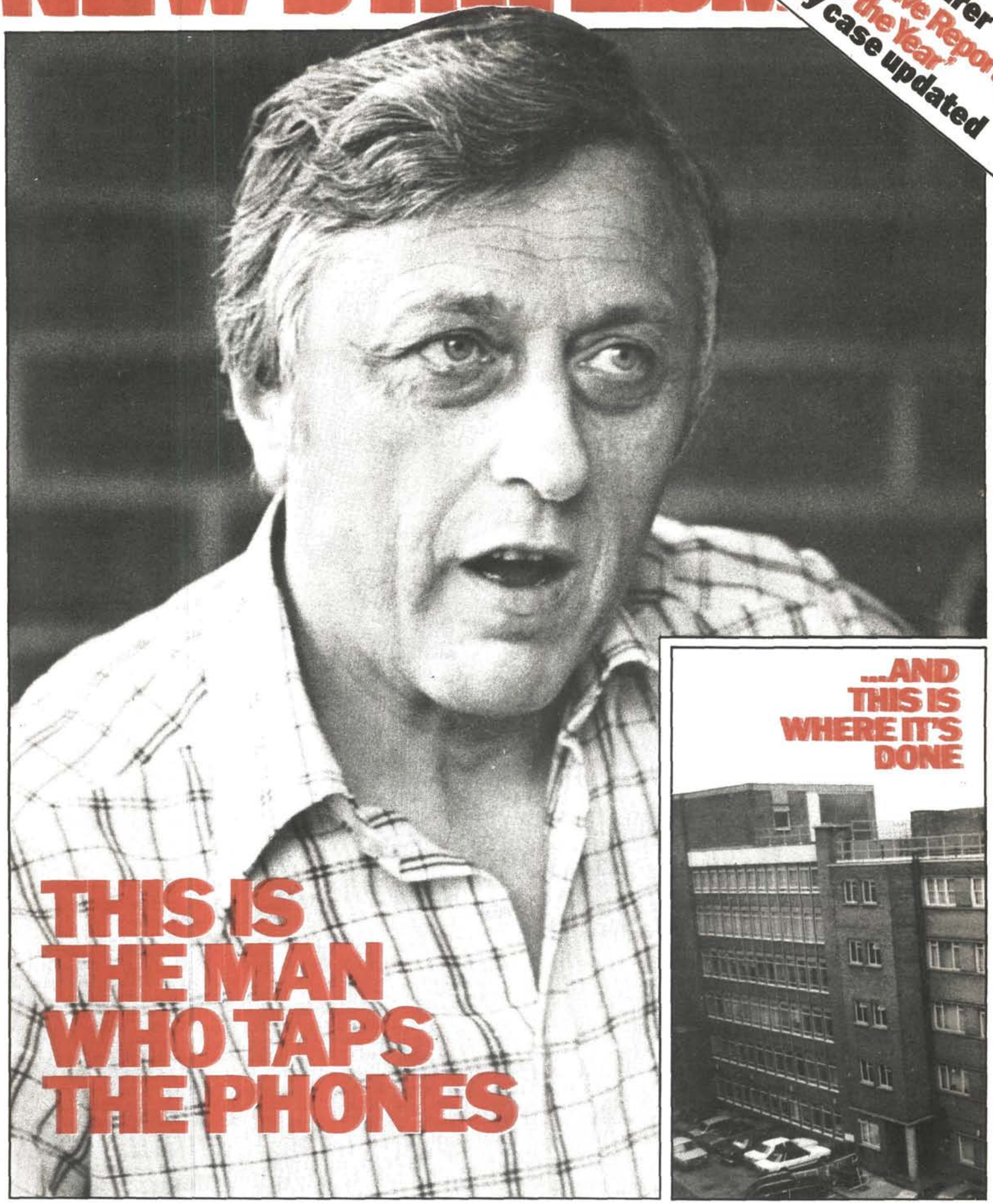
NEW STATESMAN

Rob Rohrer 'Investigative Reporter of the Year'

Kelly case updated



THIS IS THE MAN WHO TAPS THE PHONES

...AND THIS IS WHERE IT'S DONE

Inside the NF's bunker/London Diary: Tariq Ali
The deathbed confessions of Goronwy Rees
Tony Miles: how I beat Karpov

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NEW STATESMAN
Vol 99 1 February 1980 No 2550

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Enemies of democracy

LET US dust off an old, uncompromising truth. The condition on which liberty is given to man, said John Philpot Curran, 'is eternal vigilance; which condition if he breaks, servitude is at once the consequence of his crime, and the punishment of his guilt'. We may still listen with profit to the lawyer who defended Robert Emmet and Wolfe Tone, knowing that to do so was to risk his own liberty and his own safety.

Are people in this country sufficiently vigilant today in their scrutiny of the police, the spies and the security officers who profess to guard them? Our belief is that they sleep too soundly.

We have printed, in the past few months, considerable evidence of endemic corruption and episodic violence on the part of the civilian police. The NEW STATESMAN has not been alone in saying that the attempts made so far to bring these evils under control have been less than satisfactory. This week, we give some anatomy of the extensive and uncontrolled security-service bureaucracy, which lies closer to the heart of the state than the police can ever do. In particular, we set out evidence about the size, the elaboration, and the untrammelled illegality of the security-services' telephone-tapping operations.

To be sure, any democracy in today's troubled world requires to have intelligence about its enemies (and it is scarcely the case that every enemy of the British state is the friend of liberty). But no democracy benefits from intelligence services which are allowed to place themselves above scrutiny and supervision. Few parts indeed of our national bureaucratic machine are effectively answerable to the public's representatives: but the luxuriant empire of the security chieftains lies quite beyond the horizon of democracy.

THE BRITISH SITUATION is a curious one: the people, in most classes, possess the temperament of liberty, but the legal and constitutional structure of the country present every opportunity that a bureaucratic tyranny might desire. We have a weak legislature, a sycophantic press, a complaisant legal profession, and much evilly repressive law (to allow conspiracy to survive is serious enough, without building on it the statutes which deal with official secrets, terrorism and immigration). In addition, we allow the executive to inform us blandly that the unexplained work of our non-existent spooks can only be properly performed if nobody knows what they are up to. It is not actually true that all the work of properly-conducted security and intelligence services needs to be performed behind clouds of mystery: insistence that it must be so merely strengthens the suspicion that it is privilege and power that is under protection, rather than operational efficiency.

Of course, 'efficiency' can only be defined in relation to some agreed and well-defined goal. It is the peculiar advantage of an unregulated secret service that it sets its own goals and defines its own targets. Its brief may be to deal with the 'enemies of the state', but it is its own activities which decide who those enemies are. It may then judge for itself the 'efficiency' of its pursuit.

One reason why our legal and constitutional system seems flimsily inadequate when confronted with the ramified power of the security bureaucracy is that it evolved long before the advent of the technologies of subversion and surveillance in which that bureaucracy deals. Some imagination is required to understand this, and perhaps it is still too much for that stolid British mind which responds well enough to any contingent threat – like an assault on a jury's independence – but dwells otherwise in a world of avuncular bobbies and pipe-smoking, Buchanesque spy-captains. But, to go one step beyond John Philpot Curran, the raw material of vigilance is imagination – and the British imagination might usefully focus itself less upon the past antics of Guy Burgess & Co, and a little more on what the present-day 'security' personnel are up to.

Britain, certainly, has not succumbed to the police-state disease. But it is necessary to keep a sharp watch upon symptoms. Recovery is infrequent if the disease ever becomes firmly established.

NOTES

The illogic of three men in wigs

Anthony Blair writes: Last Saturday the Court of Appeal, led by Lord Denning, massively overreached itself. The Court granted the private steel companies an injunction restraining the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation (ISTC) from instructing members in the private steel industry to join the steel strike. The Court held the instruction not to be in furtherance of a trade dispute. The decision is staggering coming, as it does, in the wake of the *MacShane* case which lawyers thought had at last clarified the law defining a trade dispute in favour of the unions.

To extricate itself from the implications of the *MacShane* judgment the Court said that there were actually two disputes in the BSC case: one between the ISTC and BSC; the other between the ISTC and the Government. The first was a trade dispute: the second was not, because it was a political dispute and therefore any act done in furtherance of it was not immune. The instruction to ISTC members in the private steel sector to join the strike was designed to put pressure on the Government. Therefore it was in furtherance of the ISTC dispute with the Government. Therefore it was political and not immune. The reasoning only needs to be put in those terms to reveal the fallacy in it. The court did not so much contradict the *MacShane* ruling in favour of the unions, it circumvented it by asking itself an entirely irrelevant question. The court posed the question: was there a trade dispute with the Government? The question it should have asked in accordance with *MacShane* was this: is the call to strike in the private sector of the steel industry made to further the strike in the public sector? But the court seems not to have considered such a question. It does not matter in the least, legally, whether the pressure on the Government is characterised as 'political' or not. It does not matter in the least whether *that* 'dispute' is a trade dispute or not, for the action is not taken to further *it*. The sole question, which the court seems to have ignored, is whether pressure on the Government by calling out workers in the private steel sector furthers what plainly is a trade dispute, namely, that with the BSC. It is the dispute with the BSC that the ISTC said it was furthering. In creating this other 'dispute'

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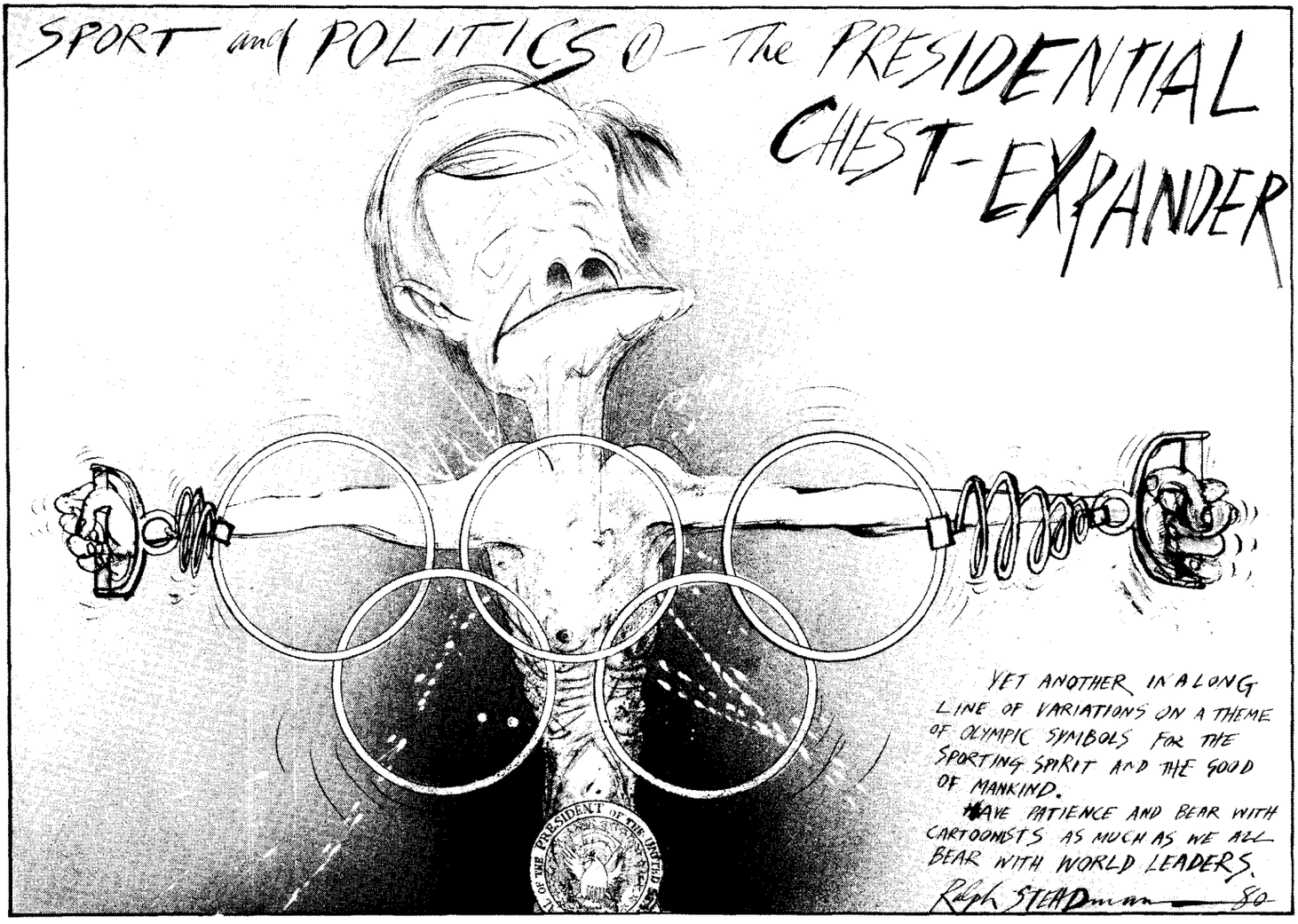
SPORT and POLITICS 80 – The PRESIDENTIAL CHEST-EXPANDER
YET ANOTHER IN A LONG LINE OF VARIATIONS ON A THEME OF OLYMPIC SYMBOLS FOR THE SPORTING SPIRIT AND THE GOOD OF MANKIND.
HAVE PATIENCE AND BEAR WITH CARTOONISTS AS MUCH AS WE ALL BEAR WITH WORLD LEADERS.
Ralph STEADman 80

NOTES

the court is just not meeting the union's case. No one said the trade dispute was with the Government. But pressure on the Government is pressure on the BSC, and is therefore pressure furthering the dispute with the BSC.

Quite apart from this, the distinction the Court draws between 'political' and 'trade' disputes is extremely shaky. The Government is the paymaster of the BSC. Spreading the strike to the private steel sector will put pressure on the Government to end the strike. No one seems to have dissented from that. If that is so, then of course the action in spreading the strike furthers the dispute with the BSC. If the Court of Appeal is right, then if BL workers go on strike for more pay, and look to the Government to provide the funds, that action is not in furtherance of a trade dispute. In other words, *any* strike where the Government is or may be paymaster is 'political', and not entitled to legal immunity.

The decision is important in two other vital respects. First, Lord Denning laid great stress on 'the grave damage to the economy' that the strike will do. However, to begin with, such a consideration is not in the least relevant in deciding whether there is a trade dispute or not. Furthermore, if a court is to start granting injunctions on the grounds of the serious effects of industrial action, then the more effective a strike, the greater the likelihood of an injunction.

The Court of Appeal has refused leave to the union to challenge its decision in the House of Lords. Can the Court of Appeal really think that a ruling as important as this does not merit consideration by the Lords, especially in view of the overruling of the Court of Appeal in *MacShane?* The union will have to appeal to the Lords against their refusal.

It remains to be seen at the end of the week whether the Lords will grant the unions an immediate hearing and decision on appeal. If not, then unions will be left with the bitter reflection that it is no use winning in the House of Lords, if they have to pass through the Court of Appeal to get there.

Iran's new president

Dilip Hiro writes: What helped the 44-year-old Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr most in his election to Iran's presidency was the disqualification of two of his important rivals: Jalaluddin Farsi and Masoud Rajavi. Farsi, the candidate of the powerful Islamic Republican Party, was disqualified because his father was found to be an Afghan national. Lacking any other suitable contestant, the IRP followers backed Bani-Sadr, the choice *inter alia* of the teachers of Qom Theological Centre.

Rajavi, the candidate of the progressive Mojahdeen Khalq, was disqualified on the ground that he had opposed the new constitution. Consequently, all his supporters – which included not only the Islamic progressives but also the leftists, and the Kurds – lined up behind Bani-Sadr. They remembered the role Bani-Sadr had played in the nationalisation of banks and insurance companies last summer, and his continued commitment to uphold the democratic rights of the people. Those, and other virtues of Bani-Sadr were conveyed daily to the voters through the columns of the *Inqilab-e-Islam* (Islamic Revolution), the newspaper he edits.

As one of the half dozen close advisers of Ayatollah Khomeini, during his stay in France, Bani-Sadr has been in the Iranian limelight since Khomeini's return to Tehran exactly a year ago. He has all along been a member of the ruling Revolutionary Council, and the chief architect of the country's economic policies.

A PhD from the Sorbonne, he spent 15 years of exile in France, finding a niche in the leftist milieu of the Parisian intellectuals, without losing faith in Islam. He regards Islamic teachings as a means to a just, equitable society. Following the Koranic edict against usury, he abolished interest in Iran's banking system last December.

Significantly, in his argument with the militant students at the American embassy in Tehran regarding trying the hostages, two months ago, he quoted the Koran. When a student leader stated that they were not obliged to follow the Vienna Convention – written by the imperialists – and do no more than expel the diplomats found to be spies, he replied: 'The Koran teaches us that all agreements, even those with the infidels, are sacred.'

A strong believer in the freedom of expression and association, Bani-Sadr has studiously avoided attacking either the leftists or the followers of Ayatollah Shariat-Madari. During his visit to Tabriz last December as Khomeini's emissary to cool the tempers of the Azerbaijanis, he openly criticised Tabriz radio and television station for its partisan reporting, and allowed the Shariat-Madari supporters to use it to announce their forthcoming rally. His presidency therefore holds promise of an amicable resolution of the minorities' problems.

News appeal

Christopher Hird writes: An attempt is being made to put Britain's only trade union-financed newspaper on a secure financial footing. The *Nottingham News* is a workers' co-operative started a year ago by journalists who were sacked by the *Nottingham Evening Post* after taking part in the provincial journalists' strike. The weekly *News* has grown from 12 to 28 pages and established a steady circulation of 12,000. Sales and advertising income covers printing and all other costs except for the wages of

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the journalists, which are paid by the National Union of Journalists. Currently this is costing the NUJ around £1,200 a week and the total bill so far is not much short of £100,000, compared with the NUJ's annual income of just over £1 million.

The *News* are now appealing for £100,000, so that they can move their offices to the middle of Nottingham – essential if classified advertising is to be expanded; promote the paper and employ extra management and advertising staff. In a city in which the *Evening Post* is the only other local paper (having bought up and closed down the *Express*), the *News* is aiming for a circulation of 20,000 a week, with 40-45 per cent of the paper taken up with advertising. At the moment advertising accounts for only 17 per cent of the paper's pages, though in November the figure was as high as 40 per cent.

In a full year the planned expansion would cost £250,000 but the *News* reckon that £100,000 will be enough to start the development which should eventually – as advertising and sales income rises – pay for itself. To avoid a further appeal, the paper still needs to make substantial progress towards its target of a 20,000 circulation within a year and even then the NUJ will be paying some of the journalists' wages. In practice, therefore, purchasing 'investment certificates' in the *News* amounts to a non-returnable donation.

This is not an extravagant sum for the starting-up costs of a professionally produced newspaper. In the rather unspecific discussions there have been about starting a paper sympathetic to the labour movement there has been a lot of talk about concentrating on the local press. So the *News* should get a hearing. The TUC's printing industry sub-committee has recommended to the constituent unions that they make a total contribution of £35,000 and the National Graphical Association nationally has promised £5,000 and all other unions, outside the printing industry are being approached. In some cases unions' rule books may prevent contributions being made but the appeal is a real test of the willingness of the labour movement to finance the sort of paper it says it wants, albeit one over which it will have no editorial control.

Beyond the fragments

Hilary Wainwright writes: A casual observer on Tyneside might well have got the impression that there was a single socialist movement in Britain able to discuss common problems from different viewpoints. That's how it seemed at a day-long Newcastle seminar of 200 activists from every major grouping on the Left. It discussed the Labour Left's alternative economic strategy, the possibilities for change within the Labour Party and the feasibility of, at least, a local alliance linking those inside and outside the Labour Party. By the end of the day there was general agreement, with a few dissenting voices, to develop such an alliance of local activists on Tyneside; a coalition not only for action but also of socialist education.

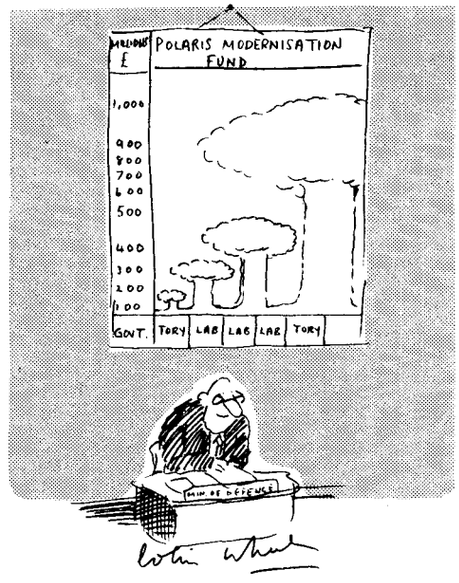
Tyneside provides a specially favourable condition for creating such an alliance because of an exceptionally low level of political activity and debate within most of the Tyneside Labour Parties. An exception to this is the Newcastle North constituency Labour Party which, as if to prove the point, was one of the organisers of Saturday's meeting.

Some of the preconditions for such an alliance had already been created by the other organisers of the meeting, the Tyneside Socialist bookshop, to organise regular debate, socialist education groups and cultural activities as well as to build support for local industrial and community campaigns. Since then it has gained the support of many Labour supporters, as well as affiliation of the CP, the SWP, the IMG, several shop steward committees and the Newcastle Trades Council. The line-up for the day's meeting reflected this non-sectarian approach. Stuart Holland MP presented the Labour Left's alternative strategy; Duncan Hallas of the SWP and Alan Freeman of the IMG pointed to its flaws. Later Audrey Wise with the support of Geoff Price of Militant argued for more socialists to become involved in transforming the Labour Party. Robin Blackburn for New Left books put the case for common endeavour not just on socialist political organisation but also of the socialist fragments – journals, research groups, women's movements and rank and file trade union groups. No single organisation and certainly not the Labour Party could alone make a real socialist and popular impact.

Though on the day there was enthusiasm for a new Tyneside alliance – beginning with the steelworkers' strike – there was an awareness of the problems, notably the danger of stepping on the toes of the local trades council and of producing a political programme so vague as to be meaningless. However the initiative on Tyneside could be part of a wider co-operation between the Labour Party and other socialist groups.

Just another betrayal

Denys Blakeway writes: Last week's news of a £1,000 million Polaris modernisation programme, 'Chevaline', came as no surprise to many Labour MPs and National Executive Committee members. It was, however, the first time the existence of the programme was given official ministerial confirmation. According to members of the NEC International Committee the previous defence ministers, Roy Mason and Fred Mulley, were constantly 'fobbing off' the Committee with denials, equivocations and cancelled ministerial meetings whenever the question of the refit was raised. In Parliament a trio of MPs, Robin Cook, Stan Newens and Frank Allaun, repeatedly asked the Ministers of Defence to confirm or deny the programme and were met with similar rebuttals.



The programme, originally known as 'Operation Antelope', was first leaked to Chapman Pincher who printed the story in the *Daily Express* in 1974. Close readings of the reports of Parliament's Defence and External Affairs Sub-committee reveal that a 'modernisation programme' was initiated in 1973 by Mr Heath and continued under the Labour administration. Several other reports of the testing of modified Polaris warheads in the United States confirm this.

Yet Mason and Mulley, relying slavishly on Civil Service briefs, were unflinching in their refusal to admit such modernisation or talk of its cost. This must have been especially onerous for Mr Mulley as he is known to have dissented from the Cabinet sub-committee decision to continue with the expensive refit. All the other members – Callaghan, Healey and Owen – were firmly in favour of the modernisation. The Cabinet itself was not informed.

Mulley refused to cooperate with the NEC's Defence Study Group and did not attend their meetings. Instead he sent a Callaghan side-kick, James Wellbeloved. He did go, however, to the NEC International Committee armed with massive civil service briefs to answer the thorny questions on nuclear weapons. These briefs included quotations from the work of Karl Marx on the strategy of Roman legionaries – it being thought that such things were the stuff of NEC International Committee meetings and likely to convert the faint hearted left winger to the cause of a British deterrent.

The figures behind your gas bill

Christopher Hird writes: In the House of Commons on Tuesday Energy Minister David Howell continued to justify the 29 per cent increase in domestic gas prices by saying that it was necessary to conserve resources and by claiming that British Gas made no profit from domestic sales. Both these claims can be doubted.

Howell's statement on profitability is based on figures provided by British Gas which were incorporated in last year's Price Commission report. These showed that in 1977/78 the domestic market made a profit of £105 million, compared with £90 million from the non-domestic market. Domestic sales accounted for 46 per cent of total BG sales but 54 per cent of profits. Although BG have not published a breakdown in previous years, domestic customers were probably making an even greater relative profit contribution as, on average, domestic prices were much higher than those of industrial and commercial customers.

In preparing for the Price Commission study BG had to allocate all its costs between the domestic, commercial and industrial markets, as it does not normally account for them separately. Such an apportionment of costs is exceptionally difficult, as the Price Commission remarked. All customers are supplied from a unified transmission system and virtually all overheads are shared as well.

The impact of the assumptions made on the results can be substantial: if, for example, domestic costs had been overstated by 10 per cent, the effect would have been to more than halve their profit contribution. This becomes particularly important when one looks at BG's forecast for 1979-80 which shows break-even on domestic gas and a profit of £228 million from the non-domestic sector. BG say they are sticking to this forecast (made, notably, when policy was aimed at increasing domestic prices in real terms). But the forecast shows a fall of 2.6 per cent in domestic gas sales when, in fact, according to BG, total sales are up by 6 per cent this year and by rather more in the domestic market. Given that there are significant fixed costs in supplying gas, domestic sales may this year make a profit. Although this will be lower than in 1977/78 it is not at all clear that domestic sales should be expected to make as much profit as industrial sales, as they are a more stable source of income. This is the reason BG has courted them so keenly.

Indeed last July BG chairman Sir Denis Rooke said 'natural gas supplies should be sufficient to meet requirements until the end of the century, or even longer, on the basis of present marketing and depletion policies'. This had been agreed with the government and took 'into account the fact that the number of domestic customers is growing at a rate of over 300,000 a year.' This is still BG's view.

Sorry about this

Today the price of the NS increases from 35p to 40p, a rise of just over 14 per cent. We're sorry about it, but it is less than the going rate of Thatcherite inflation, currently about 20 per cent.

CORRECTION

Due to a printing error last week's note on the gold price incorrectly reported the price of gold last Wednesday as $50 an ounce; the price was, in fact, $650.

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RACISM
Philip Cohen & Dot Lewis

National Front leaders sue one another as their edifice collapses

Fear and loathing in the bunker

MICHAEL HESELTINE, Secretary of State for the Environment, has yet to decide on the appeals by the owners and occupants of 73 Great Eastern Street, London EC2, against enforcement notices served on them last May by Hackney council. The council says that the premises were being used as offices and headquarters for the National Front, in breach of planning controls on the building. The recent planning inquiry, on which Heseltine will base his decision, was not a court; even so, on trial in Hackney Town Hall were both the policies of the National Front and the ability of planning laws to deal with the social problems of inner cities. The hearing, which ended in January, became an exposé of the internal divisions bedevilling the NF. It rapidly became clear that control of 73 Great Eastern St (which the NF have christened 'Excalibur House') is inextricably bound up with the struggle for control of the Front. It also became clear that the Front would be greatly hampered were they to lose the use of the building, since urban decay and a sizeable black population make the Shoreditch area an ideal location for a racist party. If they lose the appeal the Front may have to retreat as far as Hertfordshire in search of a home.

Enforcement notices had been served on NF Properties Ltd (which owns Excalibur House); on its two wholly-owned subsidiaries Leachouse Ltd, a 'trading company', and Benjuya Ltd, a 'textile concern'; and on the National Front itself. Richard Verrall, the party's head of administration, claimed at the hearing that the party had no headquarters anywhere – simply a distribution centre at Excalibur House for its publications, a legal department at Anthony Reed-Herbert's solicitor's firm in Leicester (Reed-Herbert has acted for the Front in several of their legal battles), and an administration centre at 337 Humberstone Road, Leicester. Mainly, said Verrall, the 'office work' of the party was done in people's homes. Paul Kavanagh, Director of NF Properties Ltd, told Leo Kealey, the Dept of Environment inspector, that 'NF' in the company's title was sheer 'coincidence'. ' "New Fruit" could have been in our minds,' he declared. The company was simply a 'commercial venture' interested only in the 'basic fabric' of the building.

IT IS, however, obvious that Excalibur House is the National Front's headquarters. In 1976 the party's finance committee resolved to deal with 'the amazing fact that after almost 10 years of operation since its reconstitution the party owns nothing. It was a shattering discovery' (document of the 'Constitutional Movement', currently opposing the NF leadership, Nov 1979). NF Properties was set up to find headquarters for the party and to 'provide recreational and other facilities for the use of patriotic and nationalist organisations.

Within a year a fund-raising campaign had brought in £28,000 in loans and donations. Excalibur House was purchased by NF Properties in May 1978 for £43,650. *Spearhead*, the monthly journal owned by party leader John Tyndall, celebrated the acquisition of the new headquarters as a replacement for the previous Teddington base, which had fallen foul of planning controls in 1977.

Further proof that Excalibur House is the NF's base came when Michael Stubbs, sole director of Leachouse, was forced to admit at the hearing that 98 per cent of his firm's business was to arrange for the printing ('somewhere on the south coast') and distribution from No 73 of National Front publications. The remaining 2 per cent of his trade was for Paul Kavanagh's machine tool firm. Douglas Priest, sole director of Benjuya Ltd, told us that his firm sells . . . Excalibur House ties. He hopes to diversify into T-shirts. Richard Verrall explained that as editor of *Spearhead* he 'liaised' with Leachouse – i.e. Stubbs – to arrange for publication; so did John Tyndall, as owner of *Spearhead*, and Martin Webster, as editor of *NF News*. The inquiry was left bewildered as to just how all this 'liaising' was done, since Stubbs told us he would not enter Excalibur House if Tyndall or Webster were inside.

Kavanagh, Stubbs and Priest are all leading figures among the 28 signatories of the manifesto of the rebel Constitutional Movement, published on 16 November 1979. This denounced the 'state of corruption that exists at the centre of the party, and specifically within the executive council of the National Directorate.' In an 18 page document distributed to all party members, the rebels claimed that while NF Properties had 'done its job' in providing the party with a base, the trio of Tyndall (chairman), Martin Webster (national organiser) and Verrall (director of administration) 'have all sucked value out of the party, both in cash and in kind, since they were installed in their positions, and in return they have given little to the membership that pays them except trouble, trouble and more trouble.' The Constitutional Movement are concerned at the success of the Anti-Nazi League which, they believe, caused their demoralising results in the general election. They are also dismayed by press publicity of homosexual practices within the party. In August NF Properties took out a high court injunction restraining Tyndall from impeding access to the social club on the third floor of Excalibur House. In October Tyndall and Webster tried to oust the trustees of the party block of shares in NF Properties Ltd (Kavanagh, Stubbs and Andrew Fountaine), and Tyndall tried to gategrash the AGM of the company to influence the trustees' voting.

AS IF THIS was not enough to confuse Leo Kealey, when the hearing resumed on 7 January Anthony Reed-Herbert, the party's solicitor, was not present. Stephen Sedley, representing Hackney Council for Racial Equality, was able to explain: Reed-Herbert, East Midlands organiser for the party, had spent his Christmas holiday leading the bulk of the Leicester branch into another breakaway group, the 'British People's Party'. Their first act had been to occupy 337 Humberstone Road, the NF's purported 'administration centre'.

More was to come. Kavanagh reported that a notice to quit Excalibur House had been served, on 21 December, on Tyndall, Webster and Verrall; and legal action was being taken against Tyndall for breaking the August injunction.

Tyndall has not been idle. As the hearing concluded on 11 January he was holding a meeting of some 40 remaining 'loyalists' in Leicester. The following weekend he asked the National Directorate to call an emergency general meeting to give himself greater powers. The resolution was lost by 13 votes to 2 and Tyndall resigned as chairman. 'I am convinced that the NF will survive,' said Tyndall, 'but only with me leading it.' He added: 'The support that the breakaway movements have gained is symptomatic of the general demoralisation of the party, which is due to the Directorate's failure to remove Martin Webster. Oddly enough, in previous NF rows he backed Webster against attempts by Andrew Fountaine, co-leader of the Constitutional Movement, to dislodge him. The current position is that deputy chairman Andrew Brons is caretaker chairman pending the election of a new chairman in March, and Tyndall may yet return to glory. But his position can hardly be helped by the £250 fine and estimated £4,000 costs imposed on him by the High Court last week for breaking last August's injunction during *his* Christmas break.

Martin Webster must be the leader in the most uncomfortable position. 'I hope Webster will also be leaving the party, because all you are seeing in the NF is the unclean struggle between two men on the keel of an upturned boat,' commented Lt Commander Andrew Fountaine, RN (Retd), the Norfolk landowner who is chief pretender to the throne. But Fountaine had problems too, since Tyndall is serving writs against him to hand over trusteeship of the NF shares.

Clearly no one is using Excalibur House effectively while these shenanigans are going on. It may even be that the enforcement notice becomes redundant. On 17 January a distress warrant was issued against Leachouse for non-payment of £5,000 rates. This warrant empowers bailiffs to collect money and chattels from Leachouse's registered office at 'Chivalry House', Clapham. Kavanagh's determination to put the party on a 'sound financial footing' has turned a little sour.

THE PRESENT rows within the National Front are about 'presentation' and control. On objectives and public practices, however, there is no dispute; and the hearing made clear exactly what this means for the inhabitants of the East End.

A machinist active in the Bangladeshi Youth Movement described being beaten unconscious by four youths emerging from Excalibur House. A council workman explained how he and his workmate obtained a transfer to another site after two weeks of working behind No 73, having been subjected to racial abuse and stones thrown from the windows of the building. Leo Kealey told us that such 'incidents' were matters for the criminal courts and were not relevant to a planning inquiry. 'Simon Read', who infiltrated the Front, testified that 'stacked in the corner under the window there was a pile of weapons including wooden clubs and iron bars.' He told us that No 73 was used as a 'sanctuary' for the Hoxton Skins – 'a notorious group of local thugs'. In October 1978 a

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cyclist passing through Great Eastern St was badly beaten up by youths wielding iron bars, and had to have 60 stitches in his head. The police raided the building following this attack and found 'two iron bars three foot six inches long, a pitchfork and a pickaxe handle' with inscriptions such as 'when hitting a Red, make sure they are dead' (*Hackney Gazette*, 8 October 1979). Two members of the NF were sent to prison and one to borstal following this incident. The police could have corroborated Read's evidence at the inquiry, but declined Hackney's invitation to attend the hearing. Leo Kealey refused to subpoena the police.

Witness after witness spoke of the increase in racial tension in the East End. The Bishop of Stepney's windows were broken on three occasions. 'On the first occasion I caught the youngsters and they made sieg heil salutes, on the third occasion the gang apologised with the words: "Sorry guv, we thought Pakis lived there".' Witnesses agreed with Reed-Herbert that racial violence did not begin with the National Front, but they agreed also with Rev Kenneth Leech, former rector of Bethnal Green, that 'while it is impossible to prove conclusively that all attacks stem from the NF, there is no doubt in my mind that the NF encourages activities and acts as a focus.'

On simple 'technical' grounds alone, the evidence at the hearing fully endorsed Hackney council's enforcement notices. Great Eastern Street lies within a zone scheduled for industrial redevelopment in the Greater London Development plan, and was designated an Industrial Improvement Area last June. Anthony Dinkin, for the council, presented their employment policy for South Shoreditch, which is awaiting approval from the government. The plan shows that manual unemployment is higher than the Greater London average, and argues that if office development were allowed to encroach on Shoreditch, workers would be drawn from other areas (Shoreditch fringes on the City). Hackney and District Chamber of Commerce submitted to the hearing that 'the government's partnership scheme has indeed provided a fresh confidence but the work has only just begun. We are therefore against any extremist initiative that will damage this confidence by destroying the credibility of our area, be it a political organisation or a glue factory excreting obnoxious vapours.'

JOURNALISM
Richard Winkler

Just who is giving Andrew Boyle his exclusives?

The memory of Goronwy Rees

ANDREW BOYLE'S latest report from the molehill in the *Observer* purports to be a deathbed interview with Goronwy Rees, the Burgess expert. Rees, we are told, was cheerful and his mind clear. He also appears to have had an astonishingly good recollection of what he wrote in his autobiography *A Chapter of Accidents*, published in 1972. According to Boyle, Rees told him that

> An evening at Guy's flat was like some fantastic entertainment devised specifically to take one's mind off one's labours, though I very much doubt whether Monty would have approved of it.

While according to Rees

> An evening at Guy's flat was like some fantastic entertainment devised specifically to take one's mind off one's labours, though I doubt very much if Field Marshal Montgomery would have greatly approved it. (*A Chapter of Accidents* p.156)

Or again:

> In moments of trouble, Guy Burgess would consult me in a mood of mingled contrition and impishness. (Boyle)
>
> On occasions when he was in trouble Guy would often consult me; he did so in a spirit of mingled contrition and amusement . . . (p.181)

And so on:

> Rarely did he discuss politics with me, and on pointing this out to him one evening I reproached him for it. Why was this? I assumed that he had ceased to be an agent. Perhaps he could tell me how and why this had happened.
>
> Guy would not be drawn, so the imp entered into *me*. I provoked him by saying that when he'd originally confided in me about his Comintern activities, I'd kept a written record of his words which I'd deposited with my lawyer. This shook him out of his morose silence. (Boyle)
>
> One day I said to him that he seemed to have lost his interest in politics. He said nothing. For some reason this annoyed and irritated me . . .
>
> I said I assumed that he had long ago abandoned his activities as an agent, and asked how in fact they had finally come to an end. Again he made no reply, and when I persisted he first said that he refused to discuss the matter with me and then relapsed into sullen silence . . . I was provoked into saying, untruthfully, that I had written a record of our conversation on the subject before the war, and in particular of his declaration to me that he was a Comintern agent, and that for my own protection I had deposited a sealed copy with my lawyer.
>
> To my surprise, this startled Guy out of his silence . . . (p.175)
>
> What I can and must say now (sic!) is that, as a result of Guy's consuming inquisitiveness about matters that were strictly none of his business, he'd amassed considerable knowledge of the workings and methods of the Security Service as well as of the names and functions of its officials. (Boyle)
>
> Indeed, during this period Guy's relations with the security services seemed to become increasingly intimate and confidential. Of course, the very existence of a secret service was for Guy a challenge, almost an affront, to his curiosity. He had always been possessed by a devouring interest in affairs that were none of his business . . . It is certain that during the period after the war, both in London and later in Washington, Guy amassed a large body of information about the working of the security services and about their officers. (pp.179-180)

One can only speculate as to why the dying Rees stripped Montgomery of his rank, found Burgess impish rather than amusing, morose instead of sullen, and preferred 'consuming inquisitiveness' to 'devouring interest'. Perhaps he didn't want simply to repeat himself.

Still more curious are Burgess's 'moments of trouble'. In Boyle's version these lead straight into Rees's questioning of Burgess and the fictitious document. In *A Chapter of Accidents* the trouble referred to is an alcoholic spree in North Africa which had nothing whatever to do with spying. No doubt Rees conflated the two episodes.

Boyle's moleskin thus far is more than a little moth-eaten. All of a sudden, however, Rees's extraordinary memory deserts him and he offers a version of events rather different from that to be found in his autobiography. The new version insinuates a cover-up by Guy Liddell. In the old version Liddell didn't appear at all.

According to both versions, Rees decided on Sunday 27 May that Burgess had defected and thereupon alerted David Footman of MI6 and also Blunt. Footman undertook to tell MI5. Blunt visited Rees the following day, Monday, and tried unsuccessfully to stop him talking. At this point the versions diverge. In the old version Rees told his story to someone at MI5 (not Liddell) on Tuesday 29 May. In the new version there was a mysterious delay until 'the end of the week', when Rees was taken out to lunch by Liddell and Blunt. Only after another (unspecified) delay did he then get to see two MI5 interrogators. This is the substance, such as it is, of Liddell's 'sinister' behaviour.

The interesting questions here have more to do with journalism than with treason. They are: did Rees rehash chunks of *A Chapter of Accidents* for Boyle's benefit or did Boyle lift (and misquote) them as exclusive, deathbed 'revelations'? Granting that Rees did offer Boyle a new version of what happened in May/June 1951, why does Boyle not even mention the old version? Did he ask Rees why he was changing his story and thereby giving him his scoop? Whatever the answer, it's a very odd omission in an already dubious performance.

Meanwhile, this week's *Observer* gave us Cambridge in the Thirties – a photographic *Who was Who*. Why did it not reveal which eminent Fellow of Trinity had plans for settling in the Soviet Union in 1935? Could it not now be told? If not, the curious may refer to N. Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein, A Memoir* p.16 (OUP 1958).

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CAPITALISM
Christopher Hird

Dinky toys modelled British technology; their failure models it too

What happened to Meccano?

IN LONDON THIS week, at the Toy Fair in Earls Court, the toy company Airfix was displaying, among other things, two new items: a cheap 60p Dinky toy and a small Meccano pack. In Liverpool this week, Meccano workers continued their occupation of the factory – which also makes Dinky products. The factory was occupied last month when Airfix announced that it would be closed – with almost 1,000 redundancies – after years of losses. Airfix's confidence in showing the Dinky and Meccano products did nothing to silence speculation that production will be transferred elsewhere as soon as the Liverpool factory's assets are sold. And, ironically, if Airfix had been selling these product lines several years ago, the closure might never have come about.

In 1971, Lines Brothers, Britain's biggest toymakers, went bankrupt. Subsequent events – all the creditors were repaid and there was even something for the preference shareholders – suggested that the company could have been saved with the right sort of financial and management help. It was widely believed in the City that Lines Bros was an excessively nepotistic firm making the same toys to the same high standards and in the same manner as they had done for years. There was little wrong with the company that could not be put right by good management.

Part of the company Triang was sold to Barclay Securities – a company under the guidance of John Bentley, protégé of financier Jim Slater and the very apotheosis of the sort of management of which Britain was meant to be in dire need. Unfortunately Mr Bentley did not do much to revitalise the toy industry but was rather more successful at stripping it of its real estate assets. The other major parts of the Lines company went to Airfix and competitor Dunbee-Combex-Marx who, it is reputed, managed to secure the deal over a weekend by raising the money more quickly than another bidder, offering a higher price. The story encapsulates something of the febrile atmosphere of the day: although it was not a good time for the toy industry, companies were willing to pay up for the remains of Lines, as good trade names were believed to be everything.

Airfix paid around £2.2m. for Meccano – though this price included the freehold of the factory – and has since put in over £5m. to finance spending on new plant and trading losses. They inherited a company which had been profit-making but in which virtually all of the profits had been taken to bail out the troubled parts of the Lines empire. There had been very little spent on new product development and the company relied far too heavily on a few lines for its profits. Shoppers, deceived by the size, price and essentially trivial nature of the product do not always realise that toy production is a complex, time consuming and expensive operation. It takes, for instance, about two years to turn a new product idea into a toy in the shops and – given the size of most toy companies – there needs to be substantial investment in new moulds and tooling in the factory.

This was not the only problem facing Meccano's new owners: the products themselves were in an extremely vulnerable market. Dinkies had no experience in the die-casting of small toys such as the Matchbox range made by Lesney. Dinky aimed for a much higher degree of accurate reproduction of detail but put their products into an odd price bracket: they were too expensive to appeal to the pockets of children and not grand enough to appeal to parents as Christmas and birthday presents.

Meccano products faced a slightly different problem. They had established themselves on the idea that almost unlimited amounts of accessories could be added week by week. Rising material costs started to price them out of the market as plastics – in the form of Lego – arrived on the scene, but, just as damaging, small retailers became less willing to carry the very large stocks of accessories.

Some of this should have been obvious to Airfix – Lesney and Lego were well established in the sixties – and Airfix, with their successful plastic modelling kits were not without experience in the market place, though they had little production experience relevant to what went on at Meccano.

To begin with – certainly for the first six months – it looked like a good deal. The Meccano management had resisted closure following the Lines collapse as vociferously as the workers and there was a tremendous determination to make the company a success. However, the workers, who had many criticisms of the way the company had been run, were disappointed that Airfix made very few major changes and had rejected out of hand most suggestions made by the work-force. Although there were several changes of managing director (in which the short reign of Mr Faith was followed by that of Mr Hope) and a bewildering number of new products, there rarely seemed to be a coherent plan. In the crucial area of sales Airfix left many of the previous personnel undisturbed, giving only 'guidance'. One ex-worker well remembers a meeting in 1974 when the head of the sales force rejected the suggestion that the company should be selling in supermarkets, saying that he did not want to offend the small retailers who had served them so well.

By then the market for Dinky products was deteriorating sharply – Meccano products have managed to maintain their sales rather better. The rising price of zinc meant that the top end of the toy car market was seriously overpriced. As sales fell away the workers, anxious to keep their jobs, spun out the work; productivity fell and prices rose further. Losses since 1975 have amounted to more than £5 million. Although much has recently been made of the workforce's failure to increase productivity, Airfix chairman Mr Ralph Ehrmann agreed when the NEW STATESMAN spoke to him this week that the fundamental problem had been the collapse in sales. The changes which Airfix made in the product lines were not really bold enough, so that when the market for conventional products weakened Meccano were very vulnerable. The company now sells roughly half as much as it needs to do to break even; it cannot be imagined that putting right the failures of the last decade and before can be done in a trice.

Francis Wheen

Yesterday's men

'I do get tired of hearing people who know better continually making blanket attacks on the record of the last government.' Thus John Grant, Labour MP for Islington Central and next Employment Minister but two, writing in the *Guardian* last week. This week the Fabian Society added to Mr Grant's weariness by publishing *Labour and Equality* (Heinemann, £4.50). True, the book concentrates on specific rather than 'blanket' criticisms, but the sum of its parts is a pretty comprehensive indictment of Labour in office. As Nick Bosanquet, co-editor of the book, comments: 'Labour governments have been in office for 11 out of the last 16 years and the results must be considered intensely disappointing.'

The book is full of carefully argued critiques of Labour's achievement in different areas but one chapter – Malcolm Wicks's on urban deprivation – seems particularly emblematic of what goes wrong when Labour ministers move into Whitehall. Wicks writes with considerable inside knowledge, having worked at the Home Office under Roy Jenkins and Merlyn Rees, and he reminds us of Jenkins's famous 1972 speeches on poverty and deprivation, which were published in a book called *What Matters Now*. In one speech Jenkins declared that 'the next Labour government can be content with nothing less than the elimination of poverty as a social problem. It is a formidable but not insurmountable objective.' In another he called for an expanded urban programme: 'An eightfold expansion of the whole programme would cost only about £120 million per year. This is not too heavy a price to pay to attack the manifold squalor in areas where poverty abounds.'

What happened when Jenkins returned to the Home Office two years later, in 1974? He announced to the House of Commons a proposal by the Urban Deprivation Unit to set up 'Comprehensive Community Programmes' (CCPs), whose purpose would by 'a reordering of priorities in favour of those living in the most acutely deprived areas.' Stirring stuff – 'Jenkins plans new deal for the poor' was one headline.

From then on, according to Wicks, Jenkins appears to have lost interest in the matter and left it to his officials, who dutifully acquiesced in the Treasury's decision that, in a climate of public expenditure cuts, additional sums for deprived areas could not be found. The whole idea behind the CCPs also became bogged down in interminable discussions. 'In no way did Parliament penetrate the defences of the executive,' writes Wicks, 'to reveal the drift, the lack of energy and commitment and the feebleness which had suffocated the "new strategy for tackling urban deprivation".' By 1977, three years after CCPs had been announced in the House, only one CCP had been initiated in England (Gateshead) and one in Scotland (Motherwell), and *not one* deprived person had benefited from Labour's new strategy.

The John Grants will point out that something was eventually salvaged from Labour's policy on urban deprivation: the Urban Programme was transferred from the Home Office to the Department of the Environment (which had slightly more enthusiasm for it) and the June 1977 White Paper *Policy for the Inner Cities* initiated some useful developments. But the record is still a dismal one, and it's worth recalling what *New Society* said on the publication of *Labour and Inequality* (1972), a forerunner of the present volume, dealing with the 1964-70 government: 'Unless the pursuit of ideals like equality is carried out efficiently, it may once again end in disappointment: a failed Labour government and a further volume of recriminatory Fabian essays.' So it proved: will 1989 see yet another volume?

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EDUCATION
Rick Rogers

State sends circulars to universities ordering nursery closures

Squash, not creche

A DIRECTIVE FROM the University Grants Committee (UGC) has told universities to stop subsidising creches or nurseries for students and staff with young children. On 14 January, UGC chairman Dr Edward Parkes wrote to all universities pointing out that 'the recurrent costs of a creche should in no circumstances involve a charge on universities' general income'. Previous UGC policy has been only to recommend; this has now become an instruction. The letter goes on: 'It appears that universities have followed different practices, and that specific guidance is necessary in order to obviate the use of public funds for purposes other than those for which they are provided'. The cut-off date is 1 August 1980 at the latest.

Yet at a January session of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Education, Dr Parkes was defending university autonomy and telling MPs that the UGC 'bends over backwards' not to instruct universities how to spend their money and had no wish to meddle in how universities allocated the funds they received. The National Union of Students (NUS) believes the UGC directive is designed to pressure universities to cut out all such subsidies – and some are eagerly defining general income as *all* income irrespective of source, and opting out of day-care provision. This will hit these who have the greatest difficulty holding to a university place – mature female students with children.

Sheffield's 30-place nursery is threatened with closure. It takes children aged from six weeks to five years, and costs (after fees income) £26,000 a year to run. The students' union provides £10,000 with the rest coming from the university. Fees range from £8 to £12 a week. So a substantial amount of the cost is already covered by the students themselves. With the university pulling out, the nursery's management committee is looking for other sources of income such as the local authority social services department. In the meantime, cuts are proposed to keep the nursery going. Other university day-care schemes directly under threat include Bradford, Sussex and Reading, which runs a subsidised childminding service.

The University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST) has just announced the closure of its nursery at the end of the academic year – so that the money can go towards six new squash courts. For four years, students have been campaigning for new premises for the nursery, currently housed in a semi-derelict pub. As part of a policy of cutbacks, vice-chancellor Robert Haszeldine announced there had to be a choice between building a sports centre or a new nursery. UMIST's policy and resources committee (of which Haszeldine is a member, and from which no minutes are produced) decided to build the sports centre – on the grounds that the UGC directive excludes support for the nursery and a sports centre would make a profit. Total cost of a new nursery would be £120,000; the sports centre will cost more than £1.5 million. The first phase of six squash courts and changing rooms will cost £330,000, to be raised through a bank loan, internal university funds and a public appeal. Even money orginally earmarked for refurbishing the existing nursery is to be switched to the sports centre project.

Birmingham expects to toe the UGC line and shut down its nursery. That will save £5,000 out of a combined income from the UGC recurrent grant and students' tuition fees of over £66 million. In addition, the university has an annual income from private sources of over £½ million which could 'legitimately' be used to continue subsidising the nursery.

Preliminary results from an NUS national survey show that at least 38 out of 70 universities and university colleges have day-care provision. The survey was commissioned by the Equal Opportunities Commission. The EOC believes that the existence of such provision now depends very much on the political will of vice-chancellors, since the modest cost of a nursery can readily be absorbed or 'hidden' in the general running costs of the university, or be covered by non-public income such as charitable trusts or investment income. Polytechnics have been under a no-subsidy instruction for some time, and poly nurseries get by through a combination of high fees, the use of charitable funds, or absorbing the cost in general running expenses.

Proposed Government changes in the funding of student unions may result in unions being unable to finance day-care, either exclusively or in a partnership. That could kill off university nurseries hitherto unaffected by the UGC policy, such as at Bristol where the nursery is funded mainly out of student union funds and run by a consortium which operates a series of nurseries throughout the city. On 4 March, the NUS is holding a day of action against the UGC's anti-nursery policy.

Rob Rohrer

DPP's blind eye

WHY DID THE DPP decide not to prosecute any Merseyside police officer over the death of Jimmy Kelly? Sir Thomas Hetherington is saying nothing, beyond making it clear he felt the evidence about the cause of Kelly's injuries fell short of his department's 50 per cent rule (which requires the prosecution to stand a 50 per cent chance of success).

The public has been left angrily brooding over an unfathomable decision and Hetherington, in turn, is complaining about it being 'high season for DPP-bashing'. The bashing, (others see it as healthy debate) is likely to go on in the light of the factors – now known to the NEW STATESMAN – which influenced the DPP's decision over Kelly. They are highly contentious. A senior Whitehall source familiar with the case has outlined them as follows:

1. The evidence of three young teenagers, who said the police did not strike Kelly at all, weighed more heavily with DPP lawyers than did the accounts of four adults – three of them closer to the incident than the youths.
2. If a policeman did inflict the blow that shattered Kelly's jaw, argued the DPP lawyers, it was impossible to say which policeman. (The same source reiterated that the DPP's office stopped short of prosecuting a policeman for killing Blair Peach because it could not single out the officer who dealt the blow.)
3. The visibility – Kelly was arrested around midnight – 'was too damn bad. No one could clearly see what happened.'

A combination of these factors led the DPP to the unanimous conclusion that 'there was no prospect of a conviction'. Kelly's weak heart convinced them all that a charge of murder or manslaughter, despite the savagery of the attack described in some eyewitness statements, was out of the question. That left them considering the possibility of an assault charge.

The decision not to follow this course rested largely on the evidence of the teenagers. One of them – Colin Ray, a 14-year-old expelled from his local school for punching a teacher – says: 'The fellow on the floor (Kelly) was kicking the policeman who was on top of him. The policeman was on top of his chest to stop him throwing punches up. The policeman with the shirt on was kicking the bricks away that were near to them. I did not see either of the policemen hit the man on the ground.' This directly contradicts the account of Mrs Pauline Gilbert, who was considerably closer to the arrest point. Her children's bedroom directly overlooked the incident. From the window she saw the shirt-sleeved policeman 'kicking the man . . . He kicked hell out of him.'

Disturbingly, one of the teenagers says he was told by Merseyside police, as he was giving his statement, that Kelly died from a heart attack. If, as the boys say, no blows were struck by the police how did Kelly come by his dreadful injuries? He appeared to be untroubled as he walked onto the wasteland where he met the police officers. Witnesses say he was singing drunkenly (a feat he could not have managed with a doubly fractured jaw). Little more than half an hour later he was dead.

Any worry about only one officer being implicated seems somewhat curious given the DPP's usual approach to this sort of matter when it concerns civilians. In the absence of witnesses saying one party was clearly trying to stop the other, it appears the officers were, to use a phrase popular with the DPP, acting in concert.

The DPP's reliance upon the poor light – which would have hampered the view of the teenagers more than of Mrs Gilbert and her husband – raises important questions about the West Midlands investigation of Jimmy Kelly's death. Did it refer, for instance, to meteorological data about the likely visibility? At that time of year, according to Jodrell Bank, there is never complete astronomical darkness – it was the eve of the longest day – and Liverpool airport's met office reported good visibility and little cloud around midnight.

The force of the DPP's arguments on all these points is substantially weakened by the fact that the Director did not have before him an 'independent' report of an outside police force. West Midlands assistant chief constable David Gerty failed to interview a number of crucial witnesses, presumably relying upon statements already taken by Merseyside police. Even the *Daily Star* took the trouble to listen to the witnesses.

The public cannot square these omissions with Sir Thomas's belief that the police are more thorough when they investigate themselves. The deep current of public cynicism over the DPP's handling of the Jimmy Kelly affair will not be stemmed by deriding it as 'bashing'. Because of its restricted brief next month's inquest on Jimmy Kelly will do little more than place on record the succession of unanswered questions. Only the public inquiry the Home Office are at last contemplating will offer any hopes of finding the answers.

ROB ROHRER

This week Granada Television's 'What the Papers Say' panel named Rob Rohrer Investigative Reporter of the Year for his work on the Kelly case, which was published in the NEW STATESMAN.

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UNITED STATES
Claudia Wright

The White House may be forced to subsidise farmers for years to come

Grain embargo backfires

UNTIL EARLY THIS MONTH, Zbigniew Brzezinski had never been able to demonstrate that any of his proposals for zapping the Soviet Union would hurt more Russians than Americans. Since he is widely suspected of hating both in equal measure, none of his plans for economic *Jihad* have survived the opposition of Carter's domestic policy advisers, the State or the Commerce Department. But when it came to responding to the invasion of Afghanistan with a grain embargo, Brzezinski told no-one outside the White House, and very few inside, what was up. The President spoke only to Hamilton Jordan and Stuart Eizenstat. Even Robert Strauss, whose performance as inflation counsellor and Mideast negotiator has established an unassailable reputation for being far closer to the President than anything he says would merit, was kept in the dark. The danger was that a simpleton in the circle might object that Brzezinski's plans wouldn't work, and in the reaction the news might leak.

Between Carter's and Brzezinski's schemes, however, a few of the connecting details were missing. Carter had decided that the Soviets had become the principal presidential campaign issue, and he had to act tough and fast to pre-empt Kennedy and the Republicans accusing him of softness. On the other hand, Brzezinski's proposals were obviously nutty. Carter knows the farm commodities business well enough to have realised that once the major traders had contracts for grain, they could evade an embargo by selling to third parties, and thence to the Soviet Union; that other countries would not join the embargo; and that Soviet reserves would be more than adequate to tide them over the short term until a troop pullback would restore normal trading relations.

But Carter thought that the grain was still on the farm, Brzezinski didn't care, and those who knew for sure weren't asked. This mistake precipitated the capitalist crisis of 5-8 January, and forced the closure of the commodities exchanges. Communication over the hotline from Moscow was disrupted during this time by the chortling of the Politburo over what it decided publicly to term the President's 'cannibalistic' action.

WHAT HAD GONE WRONG was that the grain to be embargoed had already been shipped to the elevators and storage companies, who in turn had accepted contracts for delivery to international traders like Cargill and Continental Grain. Everyone down the line had been mortgaging their contracts for cash to invest in spring planting and the next round of the agribusiness cycle. Unless the Russians paid cash on delivery, a multi-billion dollar stack of debts, credits and paper threatened to collapse. With this, the traditional farm credit system, on which Carter intended to rely, could not possibly cope. Everyone called his banker, and together they rushed to the White House on the morning after the President's embargo speech. The Afghan rug was about to be pulled from beneath capitalism's feet.

Under normal circumstances, the President could have risked some disruption to the farm business. In the first place, he didn't expect to lose to Ted Kennedy in the Iowa caucuses. Secondly, grain traders like Cargill are diehard Republican supporters, and the farm states will not vote for him in the general election, however much he looks after their interests. But as Carter belatedly discovered, what was at stake was more than an unruly Midwest constituency. The sanctity of contracts, the speculative value of collateral, the pyramid of credit – these could not possibly be allowed to topple, and of course, they were not. But in promising to purchase 17½ million tons of embargoed grain, the federal government may now be obliged to ensure that the supplies do not return to market to depress prices, and to pay cash immediately at the original Russian contract prices. If the embargo is to continue, the government will have to subsidise a massive reduction in spring planting.

IN SHORT, the President has taken the risk out of agricultural enterprise for the next year or two, or three or four, depending on how long it takes to absorb a domestic surplus of this enormous size. He has also committed himself to subsidising the very inflation in food prices – running at a record annual rate of 11 per cent – which social evil he has been busy attacking out of the other side of his mouth.

Numbed by the contradictions of the reverse course in economic policy, stupefied by the clumsiness of the cover-up of the embargo's true costs, and silenced by White House manipulation of the entire course of the Afghanistan crisis, government officials will admit nothing. Not a single presidential candidate, newspaper or consumer group has publicly drawn attention to the budget deficit or to the higher prices for food that will result. With the adrenalin for war spurting once again in the American brain, the nation seems to have lost its appetite for food or facts – or perhaps both.

Unsurprisingly, the commodities markets have recorded leaps both in price indexes and in the volume of trade. The President has announced that the government is in a buying mood – guns and butter both – and the convulsion of early January can now be diagnosed a passing fit.

The ledgers of social imperialism and hegemonism will show a handsome profit, too. The Soviets had been committed before the crisis to paying higher prices than are likely to prevail for the foreseeable future. With the embargo, they have stopped selling gold – they are the world's second-largest gold exporter – in order to make the foreign exchange to meet the grain bill. This has tightened gold supplies and helped accelerate gold's price through the $800 mark. Even if they are obliged to pay a premium for bootleg grain, by the time they get around to ordering, they may be twice as rich in the gold they will need to pay for it.

SECRET

Why aren't today's political historians allowed to get to the truth?

Donald Watt, Professor of International History at the L.S.E., pleads for greater dialogue between the worlds of academe and government in the interest of historical accuracy.

Also in this week's Times Higher Education Supplement:

* The Great Russian Studies Disaster.
* Terence Miller on why directing a polytechnic was no fun.
* A.S. Byatt on the need for radical reform in the study of English Literature.
* Profile of Liverpool University.

Every Friday

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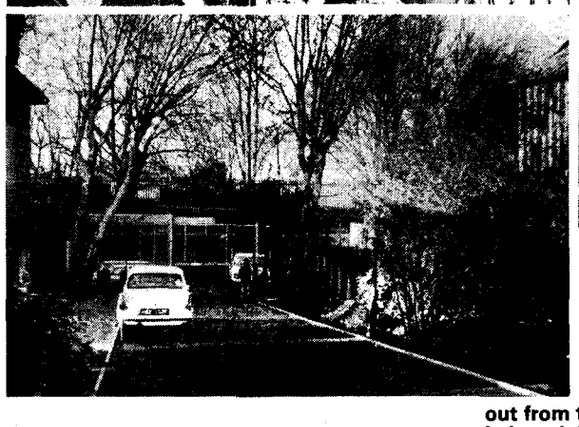
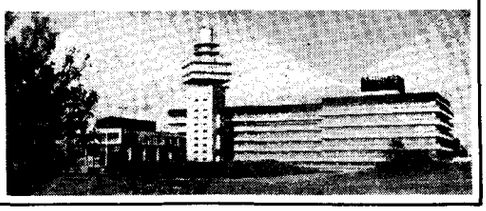
Big Buzby is watching you

This week's cover portrays the man who runs a highly-secretive Post Office installation in Chelsea. Evidence assembled from several sources suggests that this is the government's phone-tapping centre – and that the scope of its operations is much larger than Parliament has ever been told. DUNCAN CAMPBELL opens an inquiry into the proliferating structure of Britain's security state. Additional research by NICK ANNING.





Above left: Brinley Jones, Controller of the Post Office Investigation Division, which opens mail; centre: Phil Harris, Head of the PO Equipment Development Division, which taps phones; right: the distinctively curtained 16th floor of Euston Tower marks the MI5 floor out from those used by the DHSS, above and below; left: the sturdy barrier which protects the entrance of the bugging HQ concealed in Camberwell, a south London suburb; below, left: the national phone tapping centre at 93, Ebury Bridge Rd, SW1; below: Post Office Research Centre, Martlesham Heath – R12 division, which makes bugs, has top floor offices.

BRITAIN'S NATIONAL telephone-tapping service appears to operate from a building concealed behind the Industrial Tribunals Central Office at 93 Ebury Bridge Road, SW1, just opposite Chelsea Barracks. This is the organisation which is known in police lore as 'Tinkerbell'. Here thousands of telephone lines up and down the country are monitored every year, and the results supplied to the spy 'customers' – chiefly MI5, Scotland Yard's Special Branch, and the C11 squad.

'Tinkerbell' can be identified in the first place simply because this large facility appears only in ghostly form in the Post Office's official records and directories. Most Post Office activities, naturally, are publicly listed in some detail, together with accounts of their work and the responsibilities of their staff. But 'Tinkerbell' appears only as the Equipment Development Division of the PO Operational Programming Department, OP5. Its address is given as Telecommunications Headquarters, in the City, but there are no facilities there except a dropping-point for mail. It also has a City phone number, 432 4132. Operations, however, clearly centre on the building at Ebury Bridge Road, which is sealed-off through a mews: there is a small plaque bearing the letters 'PO/THQ/OPD/EDD'.

The centre has been in use for almost ten years, and according to local planning records it is a 'computer centre'. Ordinary PO staff are not allowed into the centre, which has permanently-locked doors. Its windows, overlooked by a block of Peabody Trust flats, are covered by opaque white curtains, never parted. Observation shows that it is staffed 24 hours a day: local residents are accustomed to the lights burning all night, and to frequent security alarms. Shifts of workers – a good many of whom appear to be female telephone supervisors – come and go during the small hours.

The PO of course has facilities in many parts of the country, which are employed in developing new equipment of various kinds. They are for the most part publicly identified, and do not work around the clock. (Elsewhere, of course, the PO also has substantial and well-known computer centres.) 'Tinkerbell' appears to act as headquarters for the teams of selected PO engineers who visit telephone exchanges to instal taps. These men frequently travel in standard PO vans, which are said by other engineers to be something of a 'giveaway' since they are just labelled 'Post Office Telephones', and do not have the usual words saying which Telephone Manager is responsible for them. Union officials have seen PO summaries which suggest that at least 125 staff in the highly-paid Executive Engineering grades (equivalent to fairly senior-level administrative officers in the Civil Service) are employed in OP5.

The secretive nature of OP5 is confirmed by the sparseness of its entry in the PO central staff directory – which normally runs to quite elaborate accounts of each official's function. Its Director – and by implication the chief phone-tapper – is Mr Philip R. F. Harris, who lives in St Albans. His predecessor, Mr A. E. Harvey of Chislehurst, retired a few months ago, having recently been made a CBE.

When we approached Mr Harris at his home, he would only confirm that he is employed by the Post Office. When it was put to him that he was in charge of phone-tapping, he refused to make any comment.

IN ADDITION to what can be deduced from PO records, from observation and from background knowledge about the 'state of the art' in telecommunications surveillance, there is some information available from employees and ex-employees of the Post Office (although none of them is likely to identify himself short of a full-scale public inquiry). This helps to chart the rise of the phone-tapping business from something of a cottage industry in the fifties – when the last attempt was made at systematic scrutiny through the Birkett report – to the extensive, high-technology system which exists today.

An employee who has worked in the phone-tapping operation says that the Ebury Road system was planned during the late sixties. Facilities then being proposed would have the capacity to tap 1,000 lines simultaneously. We put this to ex-Inspector Dick Lee, who headed the Operation Julie drugs investigation, and used phone-tapping extensively in the work. He said the estimate 'doesn't surprise me – with the technology that's available'. He confirmed that all telephone tapping was centralised at a facility in London, which he has visited, although he would not discuss its location.

Interviews with ex-PO employees, cross-checked with accounts of police investigations, suggest that less than 100 of Tinkerbell's lines are available for police inquiries into serious crime, with the remainder being devoted to the secret services. To judge by Dick Lee's recollections, the facilities available to the police remain fairly cumbersome. Long hours of listening to tapes, and sorting

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Report

of the Committee of Privy Councillors appointed to inquire into the interception of communications

Almost a quarter of a century ago the Birkett Report was published – the first and only public discussion of telephone tapping – yet Home Office ministers persistently reassure Parliament, quite wrongly, that nothing has changed.

Mr. Merlyn Rees:

. . . . . .

Legislation is not required to legalise telephone interception. If it is required at all, it would be for the purpose of entrenching in statute the appropriate restrictions and safeguards under which interception is practised. The restrictions and safeguards applicable in this country were scrutinised and commended in 1957 by the Birkett Committee. Its report (Cmnd. 283) has ever since then provided the basis on which interception is carried out, and I can assure the House that it continues to do so today.

I recognise the importance of adequate and effective safeguards for the liberty of the subject. . . . . .

out trivial from important traffic, can make the process very labour-intensive. In the past, the necessity of employing three people full-time to sort out the calls made, for example, to girl-friends from the calls made to the shop-stewards' committee has always been a restriction on the extent of phone-tapping.

Our inquiries suggest that some of the facilities available at Ebury Bridge Road – though not necessarily to the police – go far beyond this difficulty. Computerised retrieval systems enable particular connections to be automatically logged, so that a 'target' subscriber's calls need only be transcribed when he or she makes a call to some destination likely to be interesting. It is also suggested that advanced machine-transcription systems are becoming available, so that results of phone-taps can be made swiftly and easily available to 'customers'. In short, centralisation and technological rationalisation drastically lowers the marginal cost of phone-tapping. The equipment at Ebury Bridge Road was designed by GCHQ, the government's code-and-cypher centre at Cheltenham. This has access to the latest US know-how, including computerised voice recognition techniques. According to one tapping centre employee, voice-recognition operations have reached an advanced stage – given the availability of good-quality lines – and by 1978 speech on many lines could be transcribed automatically and printed-out almost 'on demand'. The centre apparently has direct links to GCHQ, to MI5 and to MI6 at Century House, over which recorded calls can be replayed on request.

THERE HAVE BEEN two major booms in phone-tapping in the last 20 years. The first came in the latter fifties, when operations were centralised in London instead of being done ad-hoc through local exchanges. The major London centre was close to Vauxhall Bridge Road, SW1, behind the present MI6 'London Station' at No. 60. That office had a capacity of 300 lines by the mid-sixties. Since there were three or four other centres in use, and the 1956 level was stated by the Birkett report of 1957 as *no more than 159 taps in an entire year,* a massive expansion had already taken place.

A training centre for tapping was established in an office in Petty France, SW1 (since demolished to make way for the new Home Office HQ). A small amount of police tapping was done there. By the late sixties, though, the obsolescence and incompatibility of some of the equipment produced a desire to bring new systems together under one roof: the result was Ebury Bridge Road.

We have been told that a national network of tapping connections covers the entire country, with 12 lines at least usually connected to every 'group' exchange in major cities. To prevent ordinary Post Office engineers recognising this system and its purpose, the lines are included in the Defence Communications Network, which is installed for military communications. It runs through ordinary Post Office facilities, but details of its operations are secret.

The phone tappers are aware that they are not popular with the ordinary engineers. They normally attach their tape outside office hours, gaining access to exchanges with special keys. Sometimes their tapping connections – which usually are recognisable to any exchange engineer – have been removed by other staff. It is said that some years ago a tapper who was making an urgent connection to a union line during a strike found himself surrounded by exchange employees who regaled him with a chorus of *Land of Hope and Glory* (Mother of the Free!). There is no suggestion that warranted police taps, targeted against serious crime, have been interfered with.

ROUGHLY 90 PEOPLE come to work each morning at Ebury Bridge Road. They include technicians and representatives of 'customer' departments. Many of the shift workers who operate the tapping services are women, and appear to be recruited from staff in 'Service Observations' – a more legitimate if objectionable system of random tapping which is designed to monitor and measure the normal workings of the phone system.

Calls reaching the centre from tapped lines are passed via a computer to multi-channel tape recorders and storage discs: one recorder, can deal with 36 or more lines (perhaps up to 100), according to frequency of use. A central register of all telephone numbers in the country, together with the names and addresses, is available: together with computerised facilities for 'scanning' connections, a set-up of this kind can provide, cheaply and easily, surveillance-power on a scale Lord Birkett never dreamed of.

Military intelligence appears to be the only agency still running a separate centre (many Intelligence Corps personnel were trained in tapping techniques during the sixties, and operated on civilian telephones in Cyprus and in Germany). The Army now runs a listening post, comparable to the Chelsea installation, on the top floor of Churchill House, a Post Office building in Belfast: we have no specific information about any possible Army tapping operations on the mainland.

One Post Office engineer last week described to us a recent case of political tapping. During the Grunwick strike, a tap was attached to the telephone used by the strike committee in the Brent Trades Council offices in Willesden Lane. This ran through Harlesden exchange: one local engineer tried to disconnect it, but engineers from the special team rapidly re-installed it. At the same time, Special Branch officers set up surveillance of the Trades Council offices from hired rooms in a nearby pub: long-range microphones were used in an attempt to monitor conversations through windows.

Home and office numbers of union leaders and others involved in major industrial disputes are frequently, even routinely, tapped: MI5 appear to take the view that ministers have no 'need to know' about the details of surveillance operations. According to the tapping-centre employee who gave us some of the most detailed information, there was no MP's telephone being tapped during the Sixties. Thus, the assurances given by Harold Wilson in 1964 appear to have been honoured.

BUT IT IS HARD to feel real confidence in any of the informal 'safeguards' which are supposed to exist. Only the police, we were told, stick to the procedure of obtaining a warrant before placing a tap: the secret agencies have 'carte blanche'. Their activities may be covered by a general warrant, which counts only as 'one' in accounts given to ministers, even though hundreds of lines may be involved. (Certainly, GCHQ has a single general warrant allowing all overseas telegrams and cables to be intercepted at will.) Warrants, when they are obtained, are handled by the Police Department of the Home Office; the Home Secretary's signature is obtained with little difficulty and little explanation. Even though ex-Inspector Lee made extensive and highly successful use of phone-taps in Operation Julie, he deplored the risks of abuse in the present arrangements. 'It's an executive decision – there's absolutely no accountability', he said to us.

IF TAPPING was once kept within bounds, this probably had more to do with problems of technology and manpower than with any structure of legal control. But the technological changes which upset that balance are only just beginning.

A new generation of British telephone exchanges, known as 'System X', is about to come into service. This, if not regulated, can

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be turned into a tool of mass-surveillance far more readily than our present cumbersome electro-mechanical exchanges – and there is another shrouded department of the Post Office which appears to be working on just that project.

In today's exchanges, large cables enter from the street, spray out onto distribution frames and are connected to long racks of switching equipment. Everything is highly visible, and comprehensible even to uninstructed eyes.

Every aspect of System X's operation will be concealed inside miniature electronic devices. Its overall operations will be controlled by inaccessible computers, themselves subordinate to regional control centres. Complex facilities for channelling calls through exchanges will anyway be required, and adding a few programmes to monitor 'target' lines will be simple. No dangerously visible extra wires will be required to be attached during semi-clandestine visits: there will be no warning lights, and rather fewer people around each exchange to notice what may be going on.

Analysis of the Post Office Telecommunications HQ Directory – which revealed the 'Equipment Development Division' – points to another odd outfit: OP7, the 'Equipment Strategy Division'. This, recently re-labelled as the 'Operational Strategy Co-ordination Division', is a self-contained section of the much larger team working on System X at 6 Lambeth Road SE1. Once again, separate lines of control and meaningless directory entries are pointers to a purpose which cannot be acknowledged.

Several Post Office engineers have told us they believe extensive surveillance capacity is being built into System X. And indeed, little effort can be involved. System X's computers will automatically generate records of who calls whom, when and for how long, as part of their means of operation. Such records, supplied wholesale for secret analysis, could provide means of supervision as exclusive as any state might desire.

THE POST OFFICE also opens mail and manufactures bugging equipment. Mail-opening is based on the 290-strong Investigation Division, located in the 25th and 26th floors of the Euston Tower building. The main job of the ID is to detect crimes against the Post Office, but much mail-opening has nothing to do with such aims. Ingenious equipment, including extremely long, thin pliers which enable letters to be rolled-up and removed from envelopes via the corners, are among the devices ID employs. There are also special sprays – one is made by the US firm Du Pont – which turn an envelope temporarily translucent, and special solvents used to ungum flaps.

Still more advanced equipment is already in service, according to two Post Office employees, allowing some mail to be read unopened. This is done by electronic scanning which can detect the carbon used in most kinds of ink. But the underlying mechanics of mail interception remain simple: letters sorted for a particular postman's 'walk' are removed selectively by a postal supervisor or ID Investigation Officer who had a list of 'target' addresses. The mail is then taken by messenger to the main local Post Office, where it is opened by ID officials, read, copied if interesting, and returned to the sorting office.

London's main letter-opening centre is at Union House in St Martin's-le-Grand, close to St Paul's. A 'Special Section' of the ID is based there: intercepted mail is addressed to the Officer on Duty, Room 202.

The man in charge of this special section is Mr R. F. G. Roberts, aged 58, an Assistant Controller in the ID. This results from a process of elimination: although Mr Roberts' name appears in official lists of senior Post Office staff, it does not appear in the ID's entry in the PO's internal telephone directory. All other ID staff of similar rank appear, and have clearly-described, legitimate functions. Callers who ask for Mr Roberts at the ID's Euston Tower HQ are referred to a City number, 432 4209.

When we placed a call to this number we were told that it was indeed the 'Special Section', and that Mr Roberts was in charge, although not present. We said that we were making a press inquiry concerning mail opening: whereupon the official at the other end denied that the Section opened mail, declined to say what business the Section *was* engaged in, and terminated the conversation very abruptly.

The ID's mail-opening programme has come to light on a number of occasions, the most notable being the case of *Freedom*, the anarchist magazine, in 1972. Intercepted mail which was being returned to the Eastern District Sorting Office in London was delivered to *Freedom* complete with the cover-note from the Special Section to an ID official at the local office. Another well-documented case concerned the Socialist Labour League (now the Workers' Revolutionary Party) in 1967, when one of the messengers involved told them about Post Office mail interception and copying, taking place in a basement adjacent to Union House.

Political groups of many complexions are aware of interference with their mail, evidenced by the otherwise impossible mixing of mail from wholly-separate postal areas. The Communist Party, for instance, which has its HQ in King Street, Covent Garden has often received mail addressed to unlikely addresses such as the anarchist bookshop 'Rising Free', then near Kings Cross Station. Members of the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science have found mail for colleagues living miles away included in their own home deliveries. On some occasions, such as the opening of some of the National Council for Civil Liberties' mail during the Agee-Hosenball case, the work has been done so obviously as to leave little doubt that harassment was intended.

BUGGING IS PART of the work of the R12 'Special Investigations Division' of the Post Office, which is run by Mr M. F. Meads and is located in the extensive new Research Centre at Martlesham Heath near Ipswich. It is well-known in the electronics business that the division orders considerable quantities of ultra-miniature electronics parts, including microphones. Members of the division have demonstrated bugging devices to security organisations in Britain and overseas.

R12's entry in the official staff directory is as unrevealing as that of its shadowy London counterparts. It contains such meaningless task-descriptions as 'improvements in current practice A' or 'physical investigation B'. Normal job descriptions are highly detailed.

Much of the sixth (top) floor at Martlesham Heath is devoted to R12. An electronic detector system guards it from entry by other PO researchers (who describe the people involved as 'Faceless'). The only entrance to the section is via a blank room with locked doors, and an intercom on the wall with which to ask for admission. Staff lists show that most of its 117 personnel are technicians, concerned with manufacture and assembly, rather than graduate scientists engaged in research.

Two-and-a-half years ago, R12 engineers secretly visited German security officials to swap information on bugs. At one meeting, they showed off an 'infinity' bug, which could be inserted in a phone and then called up from anywhere else to eavesdrop on conversations.

THIS WEEK, we put detailed questions to the Post Office concerning each of the divisions investigated here – specifically inviting them to confirm or deny that the role of the Chelsea establishment is telephone-tapping. They replied:

> The Post Office has no comment to make. The policy on interception of communications is a matter for the Home Secretary and every case has to be personally approved by a Secretary of State. We refer you to the Home Office.

We then spoke to the Home Office Director of Information, Donald Grant. He said:

> We wouldn't asnwer questions like that anyway – you know that very well. Successive answers in the House of Commons (make the situation clear). It is not in the public interest that the details be made public. The Birkett report might repay reading . . . it's carried out to the letter.

It is quite clear that the phone-tapping situation has entirely altered since Lord Birkett reported. The document, however, does repay reading in one sense: because even then there was a separate reservation by one of the committee, Mr Patrick Gordon Walker MP, who is and always has been some distance from a wild-eyed radical. He said then:

> . . .I cannot wholly agree with my colleagues that present use of the power to intercept communications should continue unchanged. In my view the purposes for which warrants are issued should in future be judged by stricter standards. . .

Those sensible reservations clearly made no impact upon bureaucratic opinion. Two brief points may be worth making in conclusion. First, the proliferation of phone-tapping equipment may be justified by reference to the 'Irish troubles'. But it seems clear that much of the expansion was planned in the sixties – well before the IRA became a substantial threat. And in any case, much of the extra load thus caused is carried directly by military intelligence facilities.

Second, it may be justified by something resembling a new Cold War hysteria. But that is a reason for stricter, not laxer, legislative supervision. One of the essential discoveries that the Americans made during the seventies was that the burgeoning activities of the 'intelligence community' – wire-tapping, mail-opening and the like – were targeted, in reality, not against the external enemies of the United States, but against the American public itself. That is a painful discovery we are beginning to make in this country. But whether we have the same legal and constitutional means for investigating it is perhaps another question.

Next week: Big Brother's many mansions

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In defence of 'patriarchy'

WHY HAVE WOMEN been subordinate, and men dominant, in almost every society known to history, regardless of the economic relations or cultural traditions which prevailed at the time? In the past decade, feminists have been exploring theories of 'patriarchy' in an attempt to answer this question. The term has been used in a number of ways, but for contemporary socialist feminists it implies (broadly speaking) an unequal social structure which is a product not simply of capitalism – nor of any economic system – but of the *difference* between women and men.

In the Christmas issue of the NEW STATESMAN, Sheila Rowbotham attacked this concept of patriarchy on the ground that it suggests 'a universal and historical form of oppression which returns us to biology' and leaves us with two separate systems: 'patriarchy oppressing women and capitalism oppressing male workers'. She proposed that instead of developing a theory along such lines, we should adopt an historical approach to sex-gender relations, examining how they have shifted and changed in response to social and economic factors. Below, SALLY ALEXANDER and BARBARA TAYLOR defend the socialist feminist theory of patriarchy. They insist that all differences between women and men, apart from obvious anatomical ones, are not products of biology, but are socially constructed. In that case, if we are to achieve genuine equality, we shall need a very wide-ranging cultural revolution indeed — one which transforms the very nature of sexuality.

THE MAJOR PROBLEM with the theory of patriarchy, Sheila Rowbotham claims, is that it ascribes women's subordination and men's domination to their respective biological roles – a politically dangerous position which can only lead to a call for the abolition of all 'biological male persons'. Feminists must realise, she says, that 'it is not sexual difference which is the problem, but the social inequalities of gender': it is not men we want to eliminate, but male power.

Like Sheila, we are socialist feminists. But we believe that sexual difference *is* the problem, or at least a fundamental part of it. Does that mean that we are busy training for a final day of sexual Armageddon, when all 'biological male persons' will receive their just deserts (castration or annihilation, as we choose at the time)? No doubt every woman has had moments when such a vision seemed attractive, but what we have in mind is (to use Sheila's words) 'a more delicate matter altogether'.

Throughout her article Sheila assumes that sexual difference is a biological given, linked to reproduction. Clearly if it is defined in this way, it is hard to see how it can be changed. However, one of the most important breakthroughs in feminist theory occurred when women began to question this commonsense definition of sex, pushing past all the old assumptions about 'natural' womanhood and manhood to examine how deep the roots of women's oppression really lay. What was needed, then, was a theory of gender itself, a new way of thinking about reproduction and sexuality. The search drew some of us towards structural anthropology and psychoanalysis. From a feminist reading of anthropology we learned that the social meaning of maleness and femaleness is constructed through kinship rules which prescribe patterns of sexual dominance and subordination. From psychoanalysis we learned how these kinship rules become inscribed on the unconscious psyche of the female child via the traumatic re-orientation of sexual desire within the Oedipal phase away from the mother and towards the father ('the law of the father'). The two arguments combined, as in Juliet Mitchell's highly influential *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*, provide a powerful account of the generation of a patriarchal system that must by definition oppress women'.

This account remains controversial within the women's movement, but it has greatly expanded our theoretical and political horizons. For if the mechanisms by which women's subordination are reproduced are also those which reproduce family structure and gendered individuals, then a revolution to eliminate such subordination would have to extend very widely indeed. It would need to be, as Juliet says, a 'cultural revolution' which not only eliminated social inequalities based on sexual difference, but transformed the meaning of sexuality itself. We would need to learn new ways of being women and men. It is this project, not the annihilation of 'biological male persons', which the theory of patriarchy points towards.

Constructing a theory of patriarchal relations is hazardous, not least because it analyses gender in terms wholly different from those of class. But without a theory of gender relations, any attempt to 'marry' the concepts of sex and class will simply do for theories of sex what marriage usually does for women: dissolve them into the stronger side of the partnership. It was precisely because a Marxist theory of class conflict, however elaborated, could not answer all our questions about sexual conflict that we tried to develop an alternative. If we need to keep the two areas of analysis apart for a time, so be it. Theories are not made all at once.

However, Sheila's own anxiety about this theoretical dualism conceals a greater anxiety about the whole attempt to construct a theory of sexual antagonism. She seems to view any such theory as an iron grid of abstractions placed over the flow of direct experience; and, as an alternative, she appeals to history to answer questions about female subordination which the 'fixed' and 'rigid' categories of theory cannot answer.

As feminist historians, we share Sheila's desire for more research into women's lives and experience. But this is no substitute for a theory of women's oppression. History only answers questions which are put to it: without a framework for these questions we shall founder in a welter of dissociated and contradictory 'facts'. Nor can women's own testimony about their relations with men be taken as unproblematic. Women have dwelled within their oppression at all times, but it is only occasionally that some have become sharply aware of it. Our analysis of women's consciousness must (as Sheila says) explain the periods of quiescence, as well as the times of anger. Simply recording how women behaved or what they said cannot give us this analysis, any more than recording what workers do gives us a theory of class: it is the underlying reality which must be examined.

Finally, Sheila is unhappy with the concept of patriarchy because it seems to discount all the good things which happen between men and women. She reminds us that women love men, that men need women, and that both sexes often find real support in each other, especially in moments of class confrontation – all true (at least of heterosexual women). But does all this loving and needing and solidarising prove there is no general structure of sexual antagonism, only bad times and good times? Does it mean that loving men is unproblematic for women, something to be gratefully accepted rather than critically investigated? Surely not. Learning to love men sexually is a social process, not a natural one, and in a patriarchal society it involves at least as much pain as joy, as much struggle as mutual support. Again, it is the analysis of kinship rules and unconscious mental life – not the study of biology – which helps us to understand how this channelling of desire towards reproductive heterosexuality occurs, and also what some of its costs have been: not only in terms of the systematic repression of homosexual love and lovers in most cultures, but also in terms of 'normal' feminine sexuality. Did not Freud help us to understand that in learning to love men we learn also to subordinate ourselves to them? The ropes which bind women are the hardest to cut, because they are woven with so many of our own desires.

The concept of patriarchy points to a strategy which will eliminate not men, but masculinity and transform the whole web of psycho-social relations in which masculinity and femininity are formed. It is a position from which we can begin to reclaim for political change precisely those areas of life which are usually deemed biological or natural. It allows us to confront not only the day-to-day social practices through which men exercise power over women, but also mechanisms through which patterns of authority and submission become part of the sexed personality itself – 'the father in our heads', so to speak. It has helped us to think about sexual division – which cannot be understood simply as a by-product of economic class relations or of biology, but which has an independent dynamic that will only be overcome by an independent feminist politics. Finally, it has allowed us to look past our immediate experiences as women to the processes underlying and shaping that experience. For like class, sexual antagonism is not something which can be understood simply by living it: it needs to be analysed with concepts forged for that purpose. The theories which have developed around 'patriarchy' have been the first systematic attempts to provide them.

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Whitehall's waste-watcher

The Tories criticise government waste, but will they take the opportunity they now have to change our inefficient state audit system? JOHN GARRETT reports.

IF PARLIAMENT WANTS to really scrutinise the Executive, the most important step would be to reform our system of state audit which is inexpert, inadequate in coverage and alarmingly dominated by the Civil Service. In 1866, the Exchequer and Audit Act set out a uniform system of accounting for government departments and established our state audit body, the Exchequer and Audit Department (EAD) headed by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG). The CAG receives government year-end appropriation accounts, examines them and reports on them to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), established in 1861.

The 1866 Act firmly established the CAG as the servant of Parliament: 'Every Appropriation Account shall be examined by the Comptroller and Auditor General on behalf of the House of Commons'. Over the years the CAG was recognised to be 'an officer of the House, independent of the Treasury'. (Lloyd George, as Chancellor, 12 April 1912). In 1921 additional categories of accounts were brought within the audit by another Exchequer and Audit Act and in the second reading debate on it the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the time said that the accounts were audited 'officially and formally on behalf of this House, so that responsibility over them through its officer, the Auditor General, is, as it were, signalised by statute'.

For decades the EAD, one of the least-studied of our institutions, remained undisturbed. The PAC, generally held to be one of the glories of our constitution, the senior select committee and vigilant watchdog of Parliament, produced reports that were rarely read and briefly debated once a year. It was not until 1966 that Dr E. L. Normanton, a former member of the EAD staff, in a masterly comparative study[1] of state auditors showed how thoroughly ineffective and outdated our system was. Normanton observed that 'at least in legal form, powers of executive direction could scarcely be more complete and they are incomparably more so than in any other Western country'. He pointed out that the Treasury prescribes the form of the accounts to be audited (and singularly uninformative they are), that the Civil Service Department decides on the number and grading of audit staff and that the CAG himself is usually appointed from the ranks of the higher Civil Service.

In contrast, the Comptroller General, heading the General Accounting Office in the United States, is an agent of the Congress and obtains the budget for his department directly from Congress after determining its requirements himself. The Comptroller General has statutory powers to direct principles, standards, forms and systems of accounting and no public authority is exempted from his investigations. In West Germany, the President of the State Audit and Federal Commissioner for Efficiency is a statutorily independent consultant to government, local and other public authorities. Ministers are bound to consult the State Audit Office on major organisational and accounting changes and on the preparation of budgetary estimates. In France, the Cour des Comptes, whose members have the status of judges and are irremovable and entirely free from outside direction, reports to the President and to Parliament and carries out investigations on behalf of Parliament.

Normanton has also pointed out that the audit carried out by the CAG is far narrower in scope than that of other state auditors. 'Everywhere, except in the UK, there appears to have been a strongly held view that the uses of all government funds ought to be investigated, irrespective of where and by whom they were spent; this principle might be expressed as, "no grant or subsidy without accountability." ' While state auditors in other countries can investigate all spenders of state funds, the CAG covers only about half of British public expenditure. The nationalised industries are not accountable to a public audit, neither are universities and a large number of other public agencies, nor are private spenders of state funds. Normanton remarked that 'more types of expenditure escape from constitutional audit in the United Kingdom than in any of the other powers of the West.'

Furthermore, unlike other state auditors, the CAG does not examine the organisational *effectiveness* and administrative *efficiency* of departments, public bodies and private spenders of state funds. Though the CAG has been encouraged by the PAC since 1887 to examine expenditure for evidence of extravagance and more recently to scrutinise a department's financial control and procurement procedures, he does not examine whether the spending achieved its aims or was well managed.

The US General Accounting Office, under its energetic Comptroller, Elmer Staats, takes a quite different view of its job. His auditing function is now more concerned with whether government organisations are achieving the *purpose* for which programmes are authorised and funds made available. Financial ('regularity') audit is now only about 10 per cent of its work and the main emphasis is on efficiency: whether the benefits and results aimed at by spending programmes are being achieved. The General Accounting Office has reported to the Congress, for example, the results of literacy and equal opportunities programmes, the effectiveness of vehicle safety programmes and the management of government contracts.

Normanton also observed that our audit arrangements fixed 'the status and careers of the state audit staff at a level in the public service which is unquestionably the lowest of any country in the Western world.' Since the work of the EAD was enforcing the simple rules of regularity audit, it was not seen as requiring a high level of training. Until recently, the department was staffed with people (apart from the CAG himself) recruited as A-level school leavers with an average age at entry of 18. State auditors in France have had to be qualified at post-graduate level in public finance (with an average age at entry of 27). The GAO in the United States employs 2,500 professional accountants, over 500 graduate management specialists and hundreds of attorneys, mathematicians, engineers, computer specialists, economists and other social scientists.

Partly as a result of criticisms, about a quarter of EAD's 600-odd staff are now graduates. Also, since 1975 all new entrants have been required to study for a qualification from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting. The fact remains, though, that ours is the only state audit in which the auditors are of a status inferior to those whose decisions are being audited.

The first Parliamentary review of our audit arrangements for over 100 years was carried out by the General Sub-Committee of the Expenditure Committee in the course of its study of the Civil Service in 1976-77. In a memorandum to the Committee submitted by the CAG, he said that his department did not examine the operating efficiency of departmental management: in Britain this was a matter for the Executive itself. Effectiveness, or results, audits of the kind carried out by the GAO in the United States were the responsibility of the department concerned 'which is, or should be, best equipped in expertise and resources to make them and whose Minister is best placed to inject the necessary policy guidance'. An effectiveness audit, he said, would require a statement of governmental objectives and the means of measuring the degree of success in attaining them. It was likely to involve questions of policy, 'an area which the CAG and his department have over the years studiously avoided.' In the course of being examined by the Committee the CAG, Sir Douglas Henley, said: 'I am, of course totally independent, even of Parliament.'

The Expenditure Committee concluded that 'by comparison with other countries our system of public audit is out of date'. It recommended the EAD might audit any accounts into which public money went, even if public money was not the bulk of receipts into such accounts; that the CAG should take over the staff of local authority auditors from the Department of the Environment; that the EAD should be empowered to conduct audits of management efficiency of all that it audited financially and that the EAD should become part of the parliamentary staff.

The government rejected virtually all of the Committee's recommendations. It replied that the CAG should not be subject to directions 'from any quarter' in the exercise of his duties, though it was willing to allow the Chairman of the PAC to be consulted on the appointment of the CAG. The Expenditure Committee then produced a further report in reply to the government's observations. In the course of doing so it again questioned Sir Douglas Henley and for his appearance the Treasury produced a note on his status and functions. The note said: 'The CAG's relationship with Parliament derives from the fact that most of his reports are presented to Parliament and he has by long practice established a close relationship with the Public Accounts Committee

[1]Normanton E.L., *The Accountability and Audit of Governments*, Manchester University Press, 1966.

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at which his formal status is that of a witness.' In oral evidence to the Committee, Sir Douglas Henley said: 'I think it would not be right for Parliament or anyone else to, as it were, have the power to distract me from the way in which I and my department ought to carry out that responsibility [For statutory audit].' He later quoted 'a note about my department' which said 'the department is independent of all other public departments, including the Treasury, but at the same time it is an important instrument of the Treasury, since it is responsible for ascertaining that their directions relating to expenditure are duly obeyed; thus, the harmonious action and mutual support of two departments are essential to efficient financial administration.' 'I think,' said Sir Douglas, 'that sums it up.' So much for the CAG, as a 'servant of Parliament', and Parliament's failure, over the years, to defend its powers.

In 1978, it was announced that the Treasury would carry out a review of the Exchequer and Audit Act. In April 1979, in an unprecedented move, a senior Treasury official was transferred to the EAD as deputy to the CAG, linking the two organisations even more closely. The presentation of new Exchequer and Audit legislation to Parliament will be a rare opportunity for the Commons to take control of a key instrument of parliamentary surveillance. We must hope that MPs are sufficiently aware of the importance of the issue to seize it.

AGRICULTURE
Barry Wilson

No more profit for British farmers in EEC support system

Now Walker wants out of CAP

PETER WALKER'S COMMON MARKET farm policy is at last achieving coherence and it could finally make sense – if he has the courage and backing to carry it through. What he wants to do is to extricate Britain from the Common Agricultural Policy.

His predecessor, Mr John Silkin, was mainly interested in extricating Britain from the EEC itself and even he now admits he achieved nothing in the reform of the CAP. But Mr Walker, a pragmatic (not passionate) supporter of the EEC, now recognises that the CAP is seriously endangering the health and strength of the EEC. And he has stumbled upon another truth: that the CAP now poses the gravest threat to British farmers – to whose interests he is dedicated.

While Mr Silkin was Minister, the CAP produced a veritable boom in UK farming prosperity (whatever the farmers would have us believe): with Britain's transition to full EEC membership, UK farm prices crept steadily up to EEC levels and only towards the end of Silkin's spell in office did profits start to wilt – mainly because of the weakness of sterling.

EEC farm prices are fixed annually in European Currency Units (ECUs). These are converted into national currencies to produce actual farm prices in each country. When the CAP was set up, it was agreed to fix 'green rates' for each currency to avoid complicating tiny day-to-day changes in currency rates. But at the time, EEC currency rates were very stable and no mechanism was set up to ensure that member countries kept their green rates at, or even near, the market rate for their currency. It was simply agreed that a change in any green rate would have to be approved by the EEC Council of farm ministers in Brussels.

This was how the last Labour government managed to keep farm and food prices in the UK from rocketing to Continental levels – thanks to the weakness of sterling. As the £ sank, the government refused to devalue the green pound to keep it at the same level, so that UK farmers got much lower prices (in real terms) than farmers on the Continent. Then began the constant bleat from the farm lobby – 'devalue the green pound!'

Mr Silkin sanctioned just three green pound devaluations during his term of office – and according to the Centre for Agricultural Studies at Reading University, that just about kept it on a level with the internationally trade weighted value of sterling. In other words, farmers were not allowed to do too much better than other sectors of the economy.

Before they won the election, the Tories promised, cautiously, a fullscale devaluation of the green pound 'in the lifetime of the parliament'. Which set the farm lobby purring. But quite suddenly the position was transformed, as the new oil-based £ leapt ahead, firming against all other EEC currencies and narrowing its distance from the green pound. Mr Walker speeded the process by sanctioning three green pound devaluations last year, totalling 11.1 per cent (not compounded). Today there is no gap at all between sterling and the green pound – and thus no scope at all for British farmers to get more money via the green rate adjustments.

This has come as a horrifying shock to the farmers, who have suddenly realised that what they wanted all along was a weak £ and regular devaluations of the green pound. Indeed, they took their plea to the CBI conference last year, calling for a 'realistic exchange rate for sterling' – and they were laughed out of court.

The general picture facing British agriculture now looks like this: only very small price rises – if any – can be expected when the Council of Ministers agree on 1980-81 farm price support levels. If the £ stays strong there will be no scope for green pound devaluations. Input costs are expected to rise by 20-25 per cent for the next 12 months and in addition there will be astronomical interest charges.

Small family farms can always tighten their belts during a squeeze, and this is why the 'peasant' farmers of Europe are so resistant to being 'reformed' out of resistance; but a typical UK farm employs from two to four hands – higher than anywhere else in the Western world. That this sort of high input, high output farming structure is not suited to the support system of the CAP is now beginning to dawn on the UK farming lobby.

Peter Walker has made it clear that he wants to do more for UK farmers – adding that he would if his hands were not tied by Brussels. But are they? There are clues in this recent statement from Mr Walker:

> Will all the nine countries really be prepared to pursue a tough pricing policy for the length of time necessary to have a real impact on production? Would they counter its effects by increased national aids and could they be prevented from doing so? If clear judgements of the European Court are defied, the prospects of getting governments to observe the rather vague provisions of the Treaty of Rome on national aids are not bright.

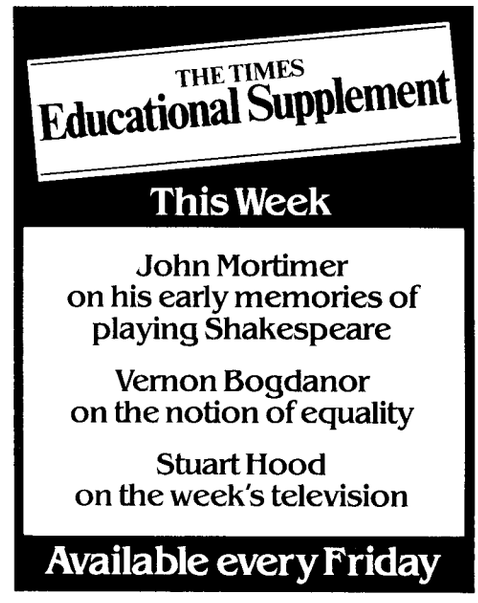
His statement contains a clear reference to the continuing refusal of the French to obey the European Court over its lamb import restriction. Does he now realise that this sort of defiance should be encouraged at all costs? After all, if the French can get away with it, why couldn't the British government get away with special assistance to British farmers when the going gets tough later this year? And Mr Walker takes his argument beyond the farming sector:

> A redistribution of the EEC financial burden could be achieved quite simply if the CAP were no longer funded 100 per cent from the EEC budget but at some lower rate, with the balance being met from the national funds of the member states in which the expenditure took place. (They) . . . would therefore have a stronger incentive to curb expenditure.

It would be difficult to get such a change past the Council of Agricultural Ministers; but circumstances are now conspiring against those worthy self-seekers. The European Parliament has already thrown out the EEC budget and might do so again. In any case, the revenue ceiling will be reached in the next 12 months (the day being hastened by any reduction in the UK's net contribution to the budget). So what happens when the money runs out?

When the same thing happened last year, some intervention agencies could no longer afford to buy up the surplus food. And there were no more funds to subsidise exports. Farm prices in Britain are less dependent upon intervention buying and export subsidies than almost anywhere else in the EEC. Which means we would be less inconvenienced than other European countries by an end to the open-ended CAP.

When and if the money runs out, the various EEC governments will have to decide whether to finance farm support activities themselves. This glorious day will see an end to the agonising irrelevance of the CAP. The EEC would survive like the grin on the Cheshire Cat – and it would be about as harmless.



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London Diary

☐ The other day, I came across a fascinating little publication. Modestly titled *Home Office Statistical Bulletin*, it revealed the figures of those detained and charged during the last quarter under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. The pattern was depressingly predictable. A total of 199 Irish people were detained. Of these 179 were neither charged nor deported from Britain. Furthermore a significant proportion of those charged were accused of minor offences (including unpaid fines) which have nothing to do with the provisions of the PTA. The *Bulletin* further informed one that since the Act was first put on the statute book in 1974 there had been 4,350 detentions. Of these 90 per cent had neither been charged nor deported. Unsurprisingly, the highest detentions are in Merseyside and the Metropolitan Police zones. Brian Rose-Smith of the Haldane Society tells me that the more interesting statistics would have been of those not charged, but stripped of their clothes and woken up every half hour in the police cells. Possibly that is expecting too much, but surely the Home Office has the resources and the talent to expand the coverage of their *Bulletin*. It could, for instance, provide statistics of those not allowed in or deported under the terms of the 1971 Immigration Act. Once this has been done a monthly colour supplement could provide us with details of deaths in police cells. These minor improvements would both provide a real service to various communities and also boost the circulation of the *Bulletin*.

☐ Shall the developing countries have a right to let their populations conquer the rest of the world, so to speak, with their sex drive? This penetrating question has been posed by Ms Vivi Krogh, a leading spokesperson for – wait for it – 'The Organisation against detrimental Immigration in Norway'. Norway was the last Western European state to ban coloured immigration. However, before the drawbridge could be raised a few thousand Pakistani workers managed to enter the country. Ms Krogh views the 'problem' as a conflict between a 'high standing Norwegian culture' and 'primitive cultures with little resources'.

Khalid Salimi, a Norwegian immigrant leader, told me last week that this 'cultural struggle' took various forms. The most common was an alarming propensity by the representatives of the 'high standing culture' to spit on those belonging to 'primitive cultures', subject them to racist abuse and humiliate their children. In an attempt to prevent the spread of this 'high standing culture' a bilingual magazine to counter prejudice (*Immigranten*) has been set up by Asians and anti-racist Norwegians.

But nothing is being left to chance. Norway has sent immigration officials on special training courses to Britain. The instructions received at this end could well be the subject of an NS competition. But paranoia knows no boundaries. A police chief specialising in detecting 'illegal immigrants' has been dispatched as Norway's Ambassador to Pakistan. His main task? Visiting villages to verify the status of dependants!

☐ Eight years ago last weekend British paratroopers shot dead 13 men in Derry. The Irish poet Seamus Heaney wrote about Bloody Sunday thus:

> It was a day of cold
> Raw silence, wind-blown
> Surplice and soutane:
> Rained-on, flower-laden
> Coffin after coffin
> Seemed to float from the door
> Of the packed cathedral
> Like blossoms on slow water.

The war intensified as a result and the beleaguered Catholics turned to the IRA. The British troops are still in Ireland. So are the Provos. But Seamus Heaney will be at the Roundhouse on 3 February to read his poetry. His visit is part of the month-long London Festival of the Irish Arts and should not be missed.

☐ About 11 years ago I was talking to an Iraqi friend in a left-wing bookshop, when another Iraqi walked in. The two were cousins and embraced each other. Then he saw me and reacted rather strangely. He dragged his cousin (my friend) out of the shop. After his departure I was told that he was an Iraqi military officer being trained at Sandhurst. There they were given instructions and target practice on a large target/screen on which films of the anti-Vietnam demonstrations were shown. The officer-cadets were told that they had to eliminate the ring-leaders around whose head a red circle appeared. The reason the Iraqi officer was nervous on seeing me was because he had shot me many times. In those heady days of ultra-leftism one dismissed such revelations as a joke. But having watched the recent television programmes on the British Army on BBC1, I must confess a chill ran down my spine. For there is no longer even the pretence of bygone days. The army sees itself as an instrument to coerce the indigenous working population if that becomes necessary.

☐ Paul Foot, Hilary Wainwright and myself are now in full training for the 'debate of the decade' when we meet Tony Benn, Stuart Holland and Audrey Wise at the Central Hall, Westminster on 17 March. Foot has given up smoking and drinking and is busy ploughing through the collected works of Clement Attlee and Stafford Cripps. Wainwright has organised a few trial runs at her Socialist Centre in Newcastle. And I'm still searching for the tapes of the last such event when Bob Rowthorn and myself debated Michael Foot and Eric Heffer in 1969. The popular verdict then was that we trounced them. And look what happened to poor old Michael. So should we be more gentle on this occasion? This question has not yet been resolved.

☐ I am told that last Saturday's conference of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions (the Communist Party's industrial arm) was a depressing affair. Instead of attempting to unite the different strands of the Left in a concerted assault against the Thatcher-Joseph regime, the organisers were more concerned with combatting the delegates of the dreaded far-left, represented overwhelmingly by the Socialist Workers' Party. At previous LCDTU conferences everything has been prepared well in advance, from the agenda to the final vote. But the CP is no longer all-powerful. Last Saturday it realised that it was out-numbered by the far-left delegates and their supporters. The solution it adopted was two-fold. Far-left delegates wishing to move amendments were brutally heckled by a well-organised claque of unreconstructed Stalinists. Then, to ensure total domination, the microphones were confiscated and the platform occupied by CP heavies; a couple of these had earlier in the day defended the Soviet intervention in Afganistan – an event whose links with either the steel strike or the sacking of Derek Robinson still remain obscure.

The conference ended in uproar and the star speaker, Derek Robinson, could not speak. This display of 'democracy' did not go down well with many CP members present and one looks forward to the inevitable exchange of letters in the pages of *Comment*. As the CP's influence declines it will continue to face similar problems. The choice is simple. Either permit democratic discussion and debate or, to paraphrase Brecht, dissolve the LCDTU and elect a new one.

☐ I am an opponent of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, but I am, quite frankly, nauseated by the cynical and hypocritical campaign unleashed by Carter, Thatcher and the Saudi monarch to boycott the Moscow Olympics. Socialists should have nothing to do with the campaigns of the Cold Warriors.

In any event there is surely no possibility of the Games ever being held in Britain. Leaving aside more recent interventions there is the case of Russia itself. Remember the editorial in *The Times* on 13 December 1918: 'Having entered Russia for a purpose, why not carry out that purpose?' And the purpose? 'To drive the Bolsheviki out of Petrograd and Moscow'.

☐ 'We bear the burden of women's destiny on our bodies. Why is it still a disadvantage to be born a woman . . .' These opening sentences would be commonplace in Western Europe or North America. What makes them remarkable is that they are taken from a women's manifesto currently being circulated in the Soviet Union. The first feminist *samizdat* made its appearance in Leningrad last December. *Almanack: Women and Russia* has an editorial committee consisting of ten women from Leningrad, Novo-Sibirsk, Talim, Archangelsk and some other cities. It contains local reports, poetry, an article entitled 'The good old roots of patriarchy' and promises a detailed description of the conditions in which Russian women work and live in forthcoming issues. Unlike many other dissidents the women of *Almanack* identify with the October revolution and wish to recreate 'the enthusiasm of the Twenties' which was stifled by Stalinism. I look forward to reading a complete English translation in the February/March issue of *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*.

Tariq Ali

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ During the hearing Mr John Share, the personnel manager, said there was nothing wrong with workers having a 'snooze' provided it was in a chair. But taking beds to work was a 'deliberate act of provocation'. – *The Times* (James Michie)

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

Militant

From Edward Bell

I want to express my agreement with Patrick Wintour (NS 18 January). As someone who was asked to join Militant (or the Revolutionary Socialist League as it is known to members) when I was a member of the Labour Party, I agree that the problem with Militant is not that it is Trotskyite or a secret organisation but that its interpretation of socialism is reactionary. It envisages a world run by male, heterosexual workers.

As an openly gay person in the Labour Party I was concerned with uniting sexual liberation and socialism. I found that most Militant people saw my fight against gay oppression as a diversion from the 'true class struggle'. This Militant view is reiterated by the opinion the tendency has of the women's liberation movement. The movement is officially seen as 'petty bourgeois'. Militant has no concept of sexual politics or any form of oppression other than that of the wage market. If you argue against this line you are condemned as politically backward.

I remain a socialist and a revolutionary but could never work within an organisation as sexist and oppressive as Militant. The problem is that not only is Militant reactionary but it is dangerous because of the support it may gain in the future. The answer is to strive for a viable socialist and feminist alternative.

16 Southvale Road, London SE3

From Geoffrey Littlejohns

When, in your crude description, 'Militant captured the LPYS in 1970', it was capturing a corpse. Since 1970, this corpse has regained life. The work of revival – yes, so often 'mundane', 'sterile' and 'dulling' – has been the achievement of the Militant tendency. If you had known the heartbreaking routine of tiny meetings organised, of dubious addresses followed up, of recruitment leaflets distributed, you would not dare to toss so lightly your sneers of 'parasitism'.

And did we drive others away? I admit our branch did have a worked-out response to 'opposition'. If the ideas expressed were those current in the Labour Left or in the Labour Right, no matter how vague, then we would encourage this opposition to speak most freely, knowing that these views reflected opinions held widely in the working class. If some opponent appeared, however, expressing the bizarre concepts of radical chic, of self-important ultra-left groupuscules, then I confess I was most 'intolerant' in argument and debate against the denigration of the role of the working class or of the significance of the Labour Party. Here indeed seems to lie the root of your embitterment against Militant. We have too well for your taste defended the Labour Party's role.

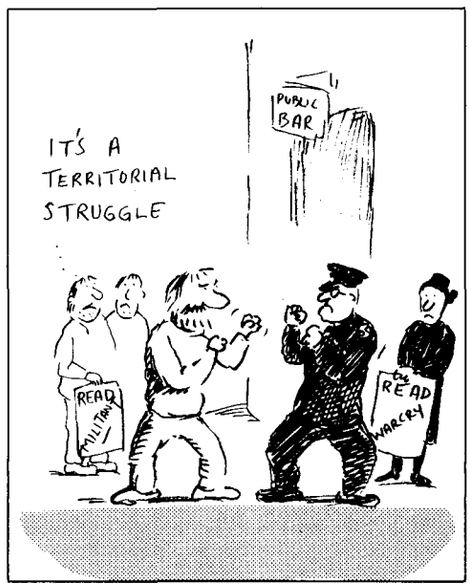
How have you claimed that we have erred? We have not associated with Young Liberals or Young Communists in CAYU. We did not join in that rag-bag front, the 'Troops Out' movement. We have been cautious of feminism – and I have seen the dedication of feminist groups to the Labour Movement when they screamed abuse at Arthur Scargill. We are refusing to join 'campaigns when they are not run by Militant', but every moment of activity in and for the Labour Party is of such a nature. I have given up numerous of my evenings to canvass loyally for those whom I knew, elections over, would denounce our ideas in the GMC as 'red fascism'.

I came to support Militant partly by a process of recoil – against those 'revolutionaries' who dismissed loyalty to the Labour Party, who delighted in the artificial rebellion in cannabis, homosexuality and religious mysticism, who wished to discuss the epistemology of Althusser of the aesthetic theory of Lukacs. Are you serious that that would attract more young workers in the LPYS? And how are we incorrect to believe that we '*must* go through the social democratic experience'? The processes occurring now in the Labour Movement are those predicted in the early Seventies.

I would advise caution in accusations that Militant undermines the Labour Left. The victories of the Left at the last conference were part of a revitalisation of the party. Membership at last is clearly rising. Yet the NEW STATESMAN did its bit by publishing an unnecessarily depressing description of the party's condition. Afterwards an article by Phillip Whitehead included arguments for PLP representation on the Party Inquiry and insults about the 'terrified geriatrics' in the grass roots. Your reporting over this Inquiry was often alarmist.

Perhaps the crowning mockery lies in 'To his credit Lord Underhill says he does not favour expulsion'. To his credit! If you read conference reports of the Fifties and Sixties you will read of the exploits of Ray Gunter and his staff as they sniffed out Marxists. Perhaps Lord Underhill was all the while deploring the expulsions he was assisting. Perhaps you know his lordship's mind better than I do. What I know is that Militant has built up the LPYS in the face of vehement opposition from his colleagues to our activity. If Militant supporters cannot be separated from the rest of the Party this is no thanks to Lord Underhill but to the will of thousands of Party members who value the effort poured out so lavishly by Militant.

13 Blount Road, Thurmaston, Leics.



From Mike Barnes

Not for the first time the newspapers have found an extremist conspiracy at the heart of the Labour Party. But the issue is rather more complex than this. The reasons for Militant's undoubted ability to 'burn out' or chase out many sympathetic socialists are many, but most stem more from Militant's lifestyle than from its political policies.

Shortly after joining the Labour Party at the age of 16, I had begun to channel my energies into the formation of a YS branch. It was at this stage that we made contact with other branches: two Militant and one Workers Action. In the process of our joint membership drives I would regularly be invited for political discussions and 'readers' meetings'. Although I was not aware of it then, the local Militant branch would allocate one or two members to have a discussion with me on policies and then report back on progress. Eventually the great day came when the Organisation was revealed to me, followed by an invitation to internal meetings. I was sworn to secrecy and, with a feeling of being involved in something very important, agreed to attend.

Ordinary Militant members were then still aware that they were really the Revolutionary Socialist League, though they would deny it to everyone outside. The ostensible reason for this secrecy was the possibility of expulsion from the Labour Party, but it also served a very different master; the sense of being party to a conspiracy contributed substantially to the group's cohesion, self-importance and seige mentality.

Labour Party work was dominated by the criteria of papers sold and contacts made. I was never very keen on 'contact work'; the dogged repetition of Militant's formulae to mostly unconcerned youngsters reminded me of the evangelical Christianity that some of my friends proselytised for. The group's sectarianism was never consciously planned. Because other groups could so easily pick holes in Militant's allegedly revolutionary politics, our formal retorts were bolstered by words that defined nothing (e.g. petit bourgeois, ultra-left, adventurist), but signified a suppressed anger about being criticised at all.

From Militant's point of view, I succumbed to a slight infection of ultra-left student virus – tired of reading Marx and Lenin via Ted Grant (easily the most deadly boring writer in the entire far left) I read for myself some of the Marxist classics. 'Why,' I asked the local full-timer, 'is it that if the state can only be a class state, we call for nationalisation of factories based on the thirds principle – one third elected by the work-force, one third through the national trade unions and one third from the government? I mean, given that we are in favour of workers' power, who do the government represent?' 'That's simple', was the reply, 'the government has to have its one third share of control because it represents the country.' This kind of reasoning was not only archetypal social democracy, it followed inevitably from Militant's statist reasoning. It also symbolised the most disorientating aspect of Militant's politics: the enormous gap between (even Militant's) Marxist theory and Labour Party practice. I am now certain that each pole of this contradiction acted to the disadvantage of the other. It could be very difficult to rationalise one's predominantly parliamentary activity (Labour Party work) with the fundamental assumptions of even a Grantised Marx, while on the other hand it was theoretical suicide for us to admit that a revolution made by the working class was inconsistent with the primary role we assigned to a future Labour Government. The only way Militant could forge some sort of connection between working class activity and Enabling Acts in Parliament was to fetishise the concept of representation in traditional Trotskyist fashion (less a question of the Labour Party's internal democracy than of the Labour Government 'representing' the working class's imputed ideology – i.e. Militant's 'Marxist' policies). Not unsurprisingly this ability to view the working class here and now as inherently sympathetic to Marxism resulted in the paper's endless tales of betrayal.

The most abiding memories of life in Militant are filled with the sheer strain of it all. If you were even moderately active, you would be asked to attend up to six or seven boring meetings in one week. Your conscience was squeezed for membership subscriptions (£3 a week when I was on a student grant in 1977) and then you were pummelled for further donations. The kind of commitment that Militant required was bundled together in the form of highly alienating personal relationships. You had to make sure your subscriptions were paid and your papers sold so as not to feel guilty when you chatted to other members. The only way out seemed to be 'family commitments' and the unspoken truth that as soon as a young Militant member got a girlfriend he either recruited her or left. There is no doubt a story to be told regarding the relationship between family life, sex and manic political activism, using Militant as a prime example of a form of transference. It was in fact this area of Militant group life that struck me as significant afterwards. Militant's hatred (I use that word literally) of feminists, homosexuals and any talk of sexual liberation seemed to stem directly from their vision of a muscular, male proletarian future and from general bourgeois ideas about sexual roles.

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LETTERS

In retrospect, the main feature of Militant's political and social practice was how unrevolutionary it all was. The only substantial claim to 'revolutionary socialist' activity that Militant could make in its members' day-to-day lives was embodied in its own existence as a conspiratorial, tight-knit group. No doubt they now see the attention paid to them as proof of their importance, and not their failure, in the Labour Party.
Lanwith College, University of York

What's in a name?

From Dan van der Vat
I do not know what I have done to deserve the honour of being labelled 'improbable' by your egregious contributor, Mr Christopher Hitchens (NS 18 January). I can assure you that I am highly likely. I cannot bring myself to believe that he was making fun of my name as such, which would cause no comment in Holland where I was born, because I would not expect such little-England childishness from a serious journalist. What therefore, I ask myself, can he have meant?

As for the short passage in an article of 2,500 words which he chose to castigate only after having had his attention drawn to it by somebody else ('The fact that successive British governments have never quite brought themselves to calling a spade a spade . . .'), I would have thought the message was unmistakable, given that the context makes it clear I was referring to immigration legislation.

I can confirm that the graphic choice of words was deliberate, with the intention of producing a small shock-effect. They clearly did, though obviously not in quite the way I had in mind in the case of Mr Hitchens. It is possible that I may be open to criticism on the grounds of taste (though I would seek to rebut that also) but on grounds of clarity – never.
The Times, Grays Inn Road, London WC1

Living theatre

From Richard Foulkes
Benedict Nightingale's survey of the theatre in the Seventies (NS 4 January) decried the state of the West End and the regional repertory companies. The West End commercial managements were criticised for the paucity of new plays in contrast to the achievement of subsidised theatres. What Mr Nightingale failed to acknowledge was the fact that it is the voracious appetite of the National, the RSC and other institutions which has so debilitated the West End. Dramatists readily receive commissions for plays for which production is virtually assured, though the number of performances may be few, and actors, who could help to fill a West End theatre for months, are contracted for two or three performances a week in a repertoire programme.

If the commercial theatre in London has been debilitated by the subsidised, in the regions it has been extinguished. Whereas even a decade ago many cities had a commercial theatre, which catered for a popular audience with comedies and musicals, few now survive. In the monopoly situation now enjoyed by regional repertory theatres should they deny large numbers of people the chance to see the plays they wish to? Everyone subsidises these theatres. Do they not have the responsibility to cater for a range of tastes, particularly when many have studio theatres geared to more experimental works? Theatres are now becoming more dependent on box-office receipts, which makes them more audience orientated, but can this enforced desire to boost audiences be anything but a good thing if the theatre is to be a popular art and not the preserve of some high-minded minority?
Dept. of Adult Education, Univ. of Leicester, Barrack Road, Northampton

At hand

From R. R. Pearce
Your correspondents who comment (NS 11 January) on Edward Thompson's most excellent article (NS 21/28 December) all deal with the long-term need for a New Left, and how to meet it. But there is the immediate need to defeat the immediate danger: the proposal to station a force of Cruise Missiles in this country. If this need is not met, and if a time of 'extreme tension' should arrive, there will probably be no long-term problem, for no habitable country will be left.

Politicians and 'experts' are playing a huge confidence trick on this country – Edward Thompson has shown how. They go further, and bitterly reproach the governments of Holland, Denmark and Belgium which have rumbled the trick.

It seems that the only possibility left in this country of exposing the deception lies in Parliament, where, surely, there must be enough MPs to force a debate and secure the sort of national publicity needed to open the eyes of the people. Indeed, one might imagine that even Tory MPs and the press would see that it is at the least unpatriotic to allow an armament in this country which is neither defensive nor deterrent, and would be under the control of a foreign power which could treat us as an expendable outpost.
Capelgrove, Capel, Ipswich

The best words

From Michael Horovitz
In 'Yous & Is & Doths & Thees' (NS 4 January), Blake Morrison tries to dismiss one half of my *Growing Up: Selected Poems & Pictures 1951/79* as 'portentous . . . psychedelia', on the basis of two lines from one of 89 poems: ' "scarlet lake guitars/ erupt their excalibur".' The lower case *e* might have alerted him (had he been reading for the music or meaning, as distinct from a quick smear) to the sense of *excalibur* here, not only as the object of 'erupt', but also *adjectivally, pointing forward* to the following line, to wit: '. . . excalibur/kaleidoscope of rainbows'.

He brands me 'a 19th-century Romantic who's lost his way'; I suppose these three lines could be apprehended in terms of Keatsian metamorphoses. But insofar as I'm adapting such modes, I'm *finding* my ways and means. Furthermore, if 'what really define' me are my occasional uses of archaism (one 'doth' & one 'Thee' in the entire collection), could not your reviewer have honoured us all with an example in context – which would show them in each case as deliberate as those of, say, S. T. Coleridge? Surely it's well and good for poetry to go on being made in the romantic or unfettered spirit, with its own continuing but open-ended diction the 'Present, Past, & Future sees'. And the more so, to be 'of any real importance'; which Blake Morrison reassures your readers mine isn't. But does he *really* know what is? Until he can prove this, let him go back and eat the better part of his name.
Piedmont, Bisley, nr Stroud, Glos.

Goethe translated

From John Calder
Rosemary Ashton's review (NS 11 January) of the Waidson translation of *Wilhelm Meister: The Years of Apprenticeship*, often, strangely, criticising it for its accuracy, was very welcome, but raised a number of questions about the manner of publication which we would like to clarify.

We wanted to undertake a new translation of Goethe's massive novel but could not afford to finance translation and production of a one-volume edition, costing at least £30, without subsidy. The antipathy of a former Chairman of the Arts Council literary panel to anything foreign made this impossible. So we decided to publish the two parts of *Wilhelm Meister* in three volumes each with the additional later material in a seventh volume. The first part is now complete. The *Years of Wandering* will appear over the next two years and the *Anhang* thereafter. Ultimately we intend to paperback the lot, as Ms Ashton suggests.

There will certainly be longer, historical introduction in the next volume to appear. Although it is unusual to have the major introduction in the middle, we feel that the reception of the first half will enable points to be made and criticism to be answered. This after all is one of the great novels of the romantic movement, written at a time of turmoil with many similarities to today. As we emerge in the arts from a preoccupation with form towards a renewed interest in content, the romantic and expressionist materpieces of the past can influence the new direction that we feel the arts, and especially literature, must take. The comparison of Wilhelm Meister with Hamlet is more than apt. Are we not all Hamlets today?
18 Brewer Street, London W1

Old time

From Julian Stubbs
Christopher Hitchens (NS 18 January) recalls music hall reflections on the constabulary. Even more appropriate perhaps are the final two lines of the last chorus of Marie Lloyd's cock linnet song (Don't Dilly Dally):

You can't trust the Specials like the
old-time coppers
When you can't find your way home.

Plus ça change . . .
45 Edgeley Road, London SW4

Middle East

From Jack Barnett
The best critics are those who have both sympathy and a good knowledge of the subject with which they are dealing. Christopher Hitchens (NS 4 January) fails on both counts. How can anyone with a modicum of knowledge of recent history in the Middle East write of June 1967: 'Then, if ever, would have been the time to make a settlement with the Palestinians. But the sensation of invincibility was so strong . . . that it led to *hubris* and from that to the ghastly entanglements of today.'

In June 1967 the Israelis were prepared to be magnanimous in victory, but the defeated Arabs felt humiliated by the scale of their defeat and met all peace overtures, from all sources, with the famous three noes of their Khartoum Summit Conference of September 1967: 'no recognition, no negotiations, no peace with Israel'. It might be argued that the October war of 1973 – perfectly viewable as a treacherous, pre-meditated attack on Israel – by being a more even conflict restored some Arab self-respect. It certainly led to Sadat's recognition that negotiation not war was a more profitable road to follow. A more constructive critic than Mr Hitchens would have seized upon this aspect of the situation, which offers more hope than the sterile sticking to the three noes syndrome of the Arab critics of the Camp David accord.
119A Broadhurst Gardens, London NW6

A room of one's own

From Alex Martin
Professor Said (NS 18 January) is hoist with his own petard. With a hypocrisy that is truly modernist in its arrogance, he condemns Orwell as all but a fraud for wanting a bit of peace and quiet in which to write his books. Where did he write his review, may I ask? In the mountains of northern Afghanistan?
Speldhurst, Brittains Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent

Information wanted

Quotations, especially but not exclusively Victorian, which are amusingly in error about science.
David Langford, 22 Northumberland Avenue, Reading, Berks.

Raymond Chandler: letters for inclusion in a collection to be published.
Frank McShane, School of the Arts, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027, USA

Unemployment: news about ways in which unemployed people have been able to make 'constructive' use of their time on the dole.
Tony Watts, National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling, Bateman Street, Cambridge

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FIRST PERSON
Arthur Marshall

Wrong boxes

Regular readers of this page (my section of it, at all events) will know that, however frivolous may seem to be the decorations and the flights of fancy and gems from memory's jewel-box with which I seek to make my prose more palatable visually and mentally, there is always to be found, as in the organ works of J. S. Bach (and that's the first time that I've ever been teamed up with *him*), at the centre and core of my articles some great and important theme of our time, but before I go on to this week's theme (the incidence, or not, of midnight dorm-feeds in the works of Miss Angela Brazil), let me just step aside for a moment to reveal yet another deplorable and quite new happening in the postal world, a very vexatious matter indeed and one of which even Sir William Whatever himself may be in ignorance, for I cannot believe that he would knowingly allow the outrageous behaviour of which the following are the disgraceful details.

My work, whether it be literary or concerned with the telly or radio-active or doing various things that are asked of me, causes me to go now here, now there, 'thorough bush, thorough brier' like a rather robust Puck. One moment I am addressing a women's luncheon Club in Humberside and counting, as I ramble on, the number of splendid ladies who, full of roast beef and trifle and that glass of sherrry that makes all the difference, have nodded off into their coffee (usually about four take the count), and the next moment I find myself judging a cake competition in Newton Abbot ('First prize must go to Mrs Wheway for her really superb simnel'). My travels frequently take me, very happily, to the charming village of Highgate, up whose hill countless provincial principal boys must this Christmas have manfully toiled as Dick Whittington ('Come on, pussy, only four more miles to London Town'). Wherever I go, I must take letter writing materials with me and attempt to keep abreast of my now rather copious correspondence. And, having written my letters, I naturally require to post them. And now, pray mark what follows and what took place on the dates of which I write, January 16th and 17th.

Highgate lies in the N6 postal area and my nearest pillar-box, painted the usual cheery red, stands in the Bishopswood Road. Donning my anti-mugging kit (grubby mac and unbecoming cap), down I stroll the two hundred yards to the box and what do I find? Firmly bolted to the mouthpiece and preventing access to the interior is a metal bar bearing the word, roughly painted in white letters, CLOSED. Ah, I thought, the box has sprung a leak or has become defective in some way and the authorities are kindly protecting our letters, so I will stroll on to the next box, three hundred yards or so away. I stroll, and again, what do I discover? Another CLOSED bar. Anxious to post my letters, I risk, despite increasing fatigue, another longish trudge. CLOSED again, by which time I am half a mile from home. And then, after that and on the next day, I hear that there are two more useless boxes in the area, making five in all. There was no explanation pasted to any box, of course: no information as to when the box would be once more open for use: no apology of any sort, and how cracked of me, in my old-fashioned way, to expect one.

Does Sir William know of this, do you suppose? If not, pray let some alert member of his PO staff and a keen NS reader, point it out to him ('Er, thank you, Anstruther'). The removal of this local and convenient means of posting letters does not matter so much to me who have access to transport and can therefore bowl, however inconvenient it may be to have to do so, to the Highgate post office itself, miraculously OPEN, but the area of which I write contains many, like myself, elderly persons and in particular there is a large home for ladies, with many of whom I am now on nodding and chatting terms ('Nice to see the sun again, isn't it?') as they progress, very slowly, to and fro. What happens to their letters, by the writing and receiving of which old people set such store? What about those birthday cards which they wish to send to adored grandchildren? How are they to manage, may one ask? One knows, and appallingly typical of our times it is, only too well what the reaction would be if one recklessly asked a postman delivering letters to take a letter back with him ('Not my job, mate', or 'Not allowed to, guv'). And so the ultimate in unacceptable conduct has been reached with the Post Office now making it impossible for some of us to post letters, and in those same boxes where they announced, in December and well before 'the rush', that only first class mail would be attended to. One's blood, nowadays almost permanently at boiling point, boils over. When my stroke comes, the bill for my costly hospital treatment (private bed, natch) is to be sent to Sir William to settle. And now, let him come out of his cosy Mount Unpleasant corner, speak up like a man and tell us whether the CLOSED procedure is now to be standard practice in all districts or whether it was done illegally and unofficially. If so, will those responsible be in any way reprimanded or punished, and I must be really out of my mind even to ask such a thing.

But to my theme, and not a moment too soon for those who, and rightly, prefer to hear of the sunny side of life, in this case, the scholastic intake of nourishment that used to be called a midnight feast, neither of those two words being strictly accurate and for 'midnight' read, roughly, 'twenty minutes to ten'. In the dormitories at my prep school on the healthy Hampshire coast, the lights (mantle-less gas flares) were put out at half past eight ('No more talking'). The food, now concealed in our chests of drawers, had been smuggled up during the day, a dangerous proceeding as the dorms were out of bounds other than at night in case, I suppose, one should come upon a housemaid emptying the slops (hand basins and *pots de chambre* abounded) and, enflamed by the presence of beds, swiftly ravish her, no easy task for a boy of eleven. After waiting in the dark, trembling with excitement and anticipation for over an hour, it certainly seemed like midnight as we furtively lit a candle, spread out the goodies and tucked hungrily in.

The menu of the feast contained but few items that would tempt a truly gourmet stomach but then anybody dotty enough to wait for solely gourmet food in prep schools of the 1920s would very rapidly have starved to death. There were Skippers sardines in tomato sauce, powdered sherbet in small paper bags and sucked up through a hollow liquorice tube, doughnuts, Chivers jellies which were chewed *nature* and in their solid state, ginger-beer correctly served from those charming brown bottles, Nice biscuits and a wide assortment of sweets ('Can anybody manage another peardrop?'). At Stirling Court we had a rather saintly boy called Paish who, kneeling nightly (as we all did) to say his bedtime prayers, remained in confab with the Maker much longer than the rest of us. At midnight feasts, pious Paish used to suggest, and get howled down, that we say grace before beginning, a prudent proceeding which might have got those Above on our side and ensured that we were not disturbed (we seldom were, as it happens) by Matron or any patrolling master.

And where, indeed, were the masters? Paid a pittance, they had dined on their own (and on what?) at 7.30 in their dingy common room that smelt of sweaty boxing-gloves and had then, presumably, retired to the bed-sitters that they inhabited and which were dotted round the small town. And then what? There was no cinema and no wireless and, too poor for pubs, they presumably corrected our exercises and then read a library book or just stared hopelessly at the wall, glumly wondering whether it had been worth emerging safely, as most of them had, from the first world war. 'There's a long long trail a-winding', the song went, 'into the land of my dreams' (or was it 'unto'?), dreams blessed by, the lyric went on, the melodious tones of nightingales. But there were no nightingales at all in the rather skimpy grounds of Stirling Court, and the dreams were dusty.

But I see that I have left no space for dear Miss Brazil. Forgive me. Another time, perhaps.

Roger Woddis

The Sakharov Connection

Let us now praise famous men
(And women, too, *ça va sans dire*),
Of firmly independent mind,
Who face the brutal and the blind
With courage of a special kind,
That moves the world to cheer.

What is a dissident? One who lives
In what was Nizhni-Novgorod,
Who begs to differ from the norm,
Who'd rather suffer than conform
Or bow his head before the storm,
And doesn't give a sod.

Would that I could ply my pen
To eulogise the fearless few!
What praises I would then bestow,
What madness from my lips would flow
With all the harmony I know,
To give the brave their due!

Ah, yes, but what superlatives
Would ring out loud and clear,
If in this fever I could find
Among the bludgeoned and the blind
A Sakharov who spoke his mind,
And was a hero here.

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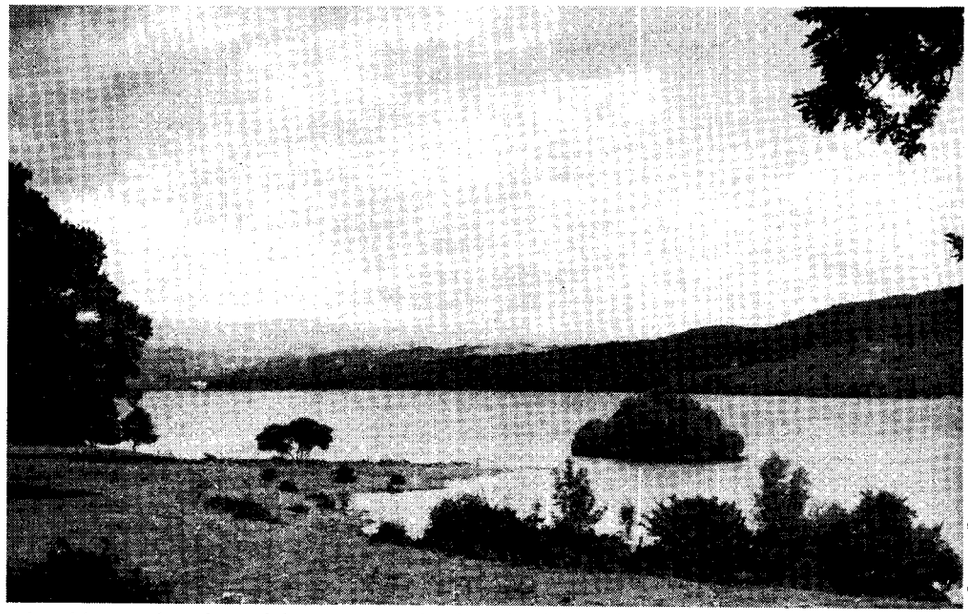
Is the countryside a joy forever?

This summer, half of Britain's population will head out into the countryside for recreation. Half a million visitors will stand on the summit of Snowdon. Eighty thousand will tramp through Wordsworth's cottage in Grasmere. The pressure on the most beautiful parts of our landscape – designated almost exactly thirty years ago as 'national' parks – will become ever more intense. CHRIS SMITH argues that these parks may now be under serious threat.



Camera Press

ENGLAND AND WALES have ten national parks, covering in all 9 per cent of the land surface area; almost alone among the developed nations, the Scots (to whom the 1949 Act did not apply) have been left without any at all. The ten English and Welsh parks vary in size and status, but between them they include some of the finest landscape in Europe: from the steep-sided valleys of the Lake District to the wild and unrelenting moorland of the Peak. All of them have been designated as parks because their landscape is regarded by parliament as being of supreme national importance.

Only two of them, however, are controlled by bodies even remotely near to being independent of local government; the other eight fall under the control of a committee of the surrounding shire authority. In all ten parks, the controlling board or committee consists two-thirds of members appointed by the county authorities, and one-third appointed by central government. In these areas of national interest and significance, control therefore rests overwhelmingly in local hands.

A classic example of the problems raised by this administrative structure has arisen in recent years on Exmoor. This national park contains some of the last areas of wild uncultivated moorland in the whole of southern England, yet the local landowners, backed by government agricultural grants, have been busily ploughing up the edges of the open moorland. As a result, over the last twenty years about one-fifth of the moorland has vanished. The national park authority, supposedly custodian of the national interest but in fact totally subsumed within the country council's committee structure, has stood idly by throughout.

The conflict between national and local interest is only one of many weaknesses built into our present park system. Hardly any of the land in national parks is in public ownership. As a result, designation creates the expectation in the visiting public of national ownership or control, without producing the reality. Park authorities have limited planning powers, a role in encouraging access and land management, and a duty to provide certain facilities for visitors, and that is all. In these vital areas of national heritage, there is little or no control over forestry or agricultural development. There are few defences against mineral working. There are no compulsory back-up powers to enforce management agreements. Little effort is made to plan traffic flow. Access agreements come only after lengthy negotiation and exorbitant payments of compensation. Large portions of national park land continue to be held – and used exclusively – by the Ministry of Defence. By comparison with any international yardstick, Britain's national park provision lags far behind the standards achieved elsewhere.

National Park	Date designation was confirmed	Approx. area in acres
Peak District	17 Apr 1951	346,880
Lake District	9 May 1951	554,240
Snowdonia	18 Oct 1951	540,800
Dartmoor	30 Oct 1951	233,600
Pembrokeshire Coast	29 Feb 1952	144,000
North York Moors	28 Nov 1952	353,920
Yorkshire Dales	12 Oct 1954	435,200
Exmoor	19 Oct 1954	169,600
Northumberland	6 Apr 1956	254,720
Brecon Beacons	17 Apr 1957	332,160

Source: Sandford Cttee Report, HMSO 1974. Areas accurate at 1972.

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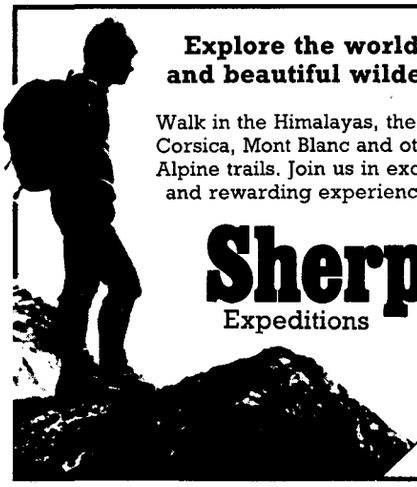

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There have been some improvements in recent years. The establishment of proper staff structures in all parks – a comparatively recent phenomenon – has given the parks, at officer level at least, a chance to fight for their own interests. And there has been a gradually growing awareness, in the balance between the conservation and recreation purposes for which parks were created in the first place, that conservation should have the prior claim in any conflict. Taken as a whole, however, the park system cries out for strengthening, for legislation to make our national parks truly national, and for a structure that will allow our wildest and most beautiful areas to remain, and be valued, in an increasingly urban society.

Legislation proposed last year by the outgoing Labour government would have given a park authority last-resort compulsory powers to preserve areas of moorland from encroachment. The Conservative version of the Bill proposes only voluntary agreement, with no reserve powers, thereby effectively emasculating the idea from the start. In addition, public expenditure cuts (as in all public services) are biting deep into park budgets, and are proving especially damaging to information and visitor services, and to contact with schools.

MOST worrying of all however, has been a recent Discussion Paper, *Conservation and the Countryside Heritage,* the brainchild of a semi-official working party based on the Department of the Environment. One of the ideas floated in this paper is at first sight an attractive one: that, instead of the present compromise system of parks with limited powers, a two-tier structure should be established. The top tier, consisting of small areas of particularly outstanding landscape, would be afforded full national protection and control. The second tier, of areas around these high priority zones, and other areas elsewhere, would be afforded only local protection with no national involvement at all. For our national parks, this would mean that the very finest portions of the parks would gain, but that everything else would lose even the limited protection enjoyed at the moment.

For a number of areas completely outside national parks – at present designated relatively meaninglessly as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty – this system would bring improved status and protection. But within our existing national parks, we should be faced with acute problems. Take the Lake District as an example. Would the whole of the central core of the Lake District, from Ennerdale to Haweswater, be included as a top tier zone, or would it be divided into smaller portions? If divided, where would the lines be drawn? How could control be co-ordinated, between the central top tier area and the surrounding second tier authority? Such questions reveal in a nutshell the absurdity of any attempt to construct two separate authorities to look after what are in fact two closely related and interlocking areas of landscape.

Part of the glory of the British countryside is the way in which the foothills merge into the mountains, and the cultivated valley floor complements the bare hillside. Points of high scenic interest do not exist in isolation, but are indispensably a part of their surrounding landscape. The whole must be managed and protected as one, and not divided between two separate agencies.

The idea of national control over the finest parts of a park is a valuable one, but only provided that one national park authority retains a coordinating supervision over the whole area, covering both tiers. The existing park authorities should be strengthened by the addition of national powers for specified areas; they should not in any way be demoted as far as the remaining parts of the park are concerned.

The danger, however, is that the Discussion Paper's idea may come to be used as an excuse for dismantling our present national park system altogether. For all its faults, it is a system the Labour movement fought hard in the Thirties and Forties to create, and it has made some progress since then. Our national parks do offer all of us, whatever our income or status, the chance to enjoy part of our national heritage, and to experience freedoms our cities can never provide. They are far too valuable to lose.

Chris Smith, Labour parliamentary candidate and author of a recent Fabian pamphlet on parks policy, is a member of the Council for National Parks.

TRAVEL 2

Two-wheeled freedom

1980 is the year of the great American getaway: favourable exchange rates and cheap flights mean that thousands of Britons will be crossing the Atlantic. ALAN EVANS suggests an original way of seeing the US.

CYCLING HAS CAUGHT the imagination of Americans in recent years and much thought and effort has gone into opening up this huge continent – which from coast to coast stretches as far as from Edinburgh to Naples – to cyclists on individual ventures or organised 'package tours'. As the air fare is likely to be the largest part of the investment (Apex or Super Apex £236/£206 from London to Boston; £266/£222 to Washington; £290 to Seattle and £359/£301 to San Francisco, with the standby and excursion rates being considerably cheaper, but with no guarantee of getting to your destination) you will be unlikely to want to go for less than two weeks, while holidays of three weeks to three months hold out particularly exciting prospects for those who wish to discover America and have some time in which to do it. Most airlines will carry your bicycle free of charge, but you should make sure of this arrangement before completing your booking.

If you are an experienced cyclist and you have time to make the necessary preparations, then you could quite successfully organise your own holiday in several parts of America, but it might be judicious to concentrate either on the Appalachian Mountain range and the East Coast area, or on the West Coast area from Seattle to Santa Barbara. Other parts such as Colorado, Yellowstone, Lake Tahoe

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and the Grand Canyon are spectacular, indelible experiences that would be with you still in 20 years' time, but the distances are vast, the worthwhile spots separated by countryside, much of which is monotonous and uninviting.

If it is your first cycling holiday in the USA, you might like to focus on the East Coast and try all or part of the East Coast Bicycle Trail which stretches from Boston, in Massachusetts, to Richmond, in Virginia, a cycling distance of some 800 miles. A detailed route of one inch-to-4-mile maps may be obtained from East Coast Bicycle Congress, 333 East 25th Street, Baltimore, MD 21218, USA, at about $5 including postage. The route includes details of hostels, hotels, motels, camping sites, bicycle repair facilities and historical and scenic points of interest.

Help and advice on such a venture should also be sought from the League of American Wheelmen (overseas membership fee $13) at 19 South Bothwell, Palatine, Illinois, 60067, and American Youth Hostel Association, National Campus, Deleplane, Va. 22025, who publish handbooks and magazines which are a fund of information on the organisational and technical aspects of such a holiday. The League also has a facility for co-ordinating overnight accommodation in members' homes which might prove to be a special fraternal way of meeting Americans as well as keeping costs down. A self-organised holiday sleeping in a combination of hostels, cheap motels and hotels and camp sites would cost the frugal traveller £50 to £70 per week, From the White Mountains of Vermont to the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia is a tough cycling terrain and you should limit your daily routine to 40 to 50 miles if you wish to take full advantage of this fascinating countryside.

Many potential holiday cyclists in the USA will, however, want some structure and support if the enterprise is to prove a practical proposition. Fortunately since the mid-1970s an organisation known as Bikecentennial has provided such a service. Bikecentennial (P.O. Box 8308, Missoula, M.T. 59807) is an educational non-profit making organisation which seeks to create opportunities for Americans and overseas visitors to experience – in the form of safe bicycling – the joys and delights of America's heritage. Bikecentennial organises group cycling holidays from 8 days to 90 days, from approximately £75 to £500; from 170 miles to 4,000 miles, with from 3 rest days to 14 rest days. The group trip consists of 8 to 10 in a party with an expert cyclist appointed as leader and organiser by Bikecentennial.

There are four types of group bicycling holiday: Camping, Bike Inn, Bike Inn with Shuttle (i.e. baggage being sent on daily for the next overnight stay) and Motel/Hotel with Shuttle. The most enterprising journey is the Transamerica Trail from Astoria in Oregon to the historic triangle of Jamestown, Yorktown and Williamsburg in Virginia. This 90 day trip, on a camping basis only with no shuttle, costs over £500 and is thus, sadly, likely to rule out most of those with true pioneering spirit, on the grounds either of finance or time. However, Bikecentennial offers several exciting 8 day, 12 day, 15 day and 28 day low cost cycling holidays from £75 (camping)/£110 (Bike Inn) to £125 (camping)/£200 (Bike Inn). Several of these holiday tours start and finish at Washington DC and cover such interesting and challenging country as the Blue Ridge Barrier, Shenandoah Valley, the Virginia Highlands, Daniel Boone National Forest, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canals and Harpers Ferry, where John Brown staged his famous raid against the Federal arsenal in 1859.

Membership of Bikecentennial is a requirement of participation in such tours, but at $10 ($5 for students) per annum, the fee is not prohibitive. Applicants are required to pay a registration fee of $25 and the balance of the cost must be paid two months in advance for the Transamerica Expedition and one month in advance for all other trips. Booking on several of the tours is often heavy and cyclists from Britain comtemplating a tour under the auspices of Bikecentennial should apply in the immediate future if they do not wish to be disappointed.

Finally, if you are seriously thinking of cycling in the United States this year, make certain that you have the support and advice of two well established British organisations : namely the Youth Hostel Association, Trevelyan House, 8 St. Stephens Hill, St. Albans, Herts AL1 2DY, and the Cyclists Touring Club, Cotterill House, 69 Meadow, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 3HS.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Margaretta D'Arcy

'Great Hatred, Little Room'

Culture and Anarchy in Ireland 1890-1939 by F. S. L. LYONS *Oxford* £6.95
Land and the National Question in Ireland 1858-82 by PAUL BEW *Gill & Macmillan* £12
The Roman Catholic Church in Ireland and the Fall of Parnell 1888-1891 by EMMET LARKIN *Liverpool* £16
Ireland 1945-70 edited by J. J. Lee *Gill & Macmillan* £10
An Illustrated History of the Irish People by KENNETH NEILL *Gill & Macmillan* £9

> Out of Ireland have we come;
> Great hatred, little room,
> Maimed us from the start ...

– the by now classic poetical tag with which the Provost of Trinity concludes his 1978 Ford Lectures is preceded by his own prose gloss:

> ... it was rather an anarchy in the mind and in the heart, an anarchy which forbade not just unity of territories, but also 'unity of being' ...irreconcilable cultures, unable to live together or to live apart, caught inextricably in the web of their tragic history ...

I am sure this is extremely moving to an audience of Oxford academics, to whom *tragedy* may be generally assumed to imply some force of inevitable destiny, for which they cannot be held responsible and to which no effort of theirs can be expected to make much difference. His 'irreconcilable cultures' are Irish: Catholic-nationalist, Protestant-unionist, etc. To a British public, they appear self-contained, self-generated aberrations, hardly at all the consequence of deliberate British manipulation, and having no particular influence in their turn upon affairs in Britain. Thus the Orange Order, which plays a great part in the story, is treated as a solely Irish movement; its connections with Toryism – and, at times, the most reactionary areas of the Royal Family and the Army's officer-corps – are carefully by-passed: so also 'Roman Catholicism bore a heavy share of responsibility for this sad state of affairs' (Irish social backwardness as seen by Sir Horace Plunkett), but the extent to which British rationalism bears a responsibility for many intransigent aspects of Irish Catholicism is not gone into. If we talk about tragedy, surely the tragedy of the self-congratulatory closed mind of the British intellectual establishment towards Ireland should have dominated an Oxford presentation by a distinguished Irish historian?

Mr Bew, a recent addition to Queen's University, Belfast, belongs – with Messrs Patterson and Gibbon – to the new school of northern historians whose aim seems to be to undercut any tendency toward a 32-county national identity; from a neo-Althusserian standpoint. He expresses himself grateful to the Northern Ireland Department of Education for the award of a major state scholarship for his research into the 19th-century Land War in Ireland (a largely southern phenomenon, because of differing tenancy-customs in Ulster). His technique is a detailed analysis of the agricultural classes engaged therein. In its efforts to control this social revolution the government was always highly aware of the opportunities offered them by Irish cultural divisions. Indeed the Liberals destroyed themselves by trying to 'win over the middle ground' and thus finding themselves up against the Tories' Orange Card.

> The active support of Orangemen and Protestants is the ultimate resource of English rule in Ireland, but ought to be kept until every other card has been played ...

wrote the realistic Earl Spencer on behalf of Gladstone to the Lord Lieutenant. Unfortunately, with all its detail, this book lacks an overall clarity. Mr Bew has felt it necessary to put in the mandatory disclaimer of any connection between the Northern Irish armed struggle of today and the events of the 1870-80s. He has been able to do this by omitting a serious account of the ideology of the early 19th-century Fintan Lalor, crucial to any understanding of either the Land War or today's conflict. He quotes Lalor indeed, but scarcely adequately. Here is a passage that would have been more helpful to the uninstructed reader:

> I hold and maintain that the entire soil of a country belongs of right to the entire people of that country and is the rightful property, not of any one class, but of the nation at large, in full effective possession, to let to whom they will on whatever tenures, etc., they will; one condition, however, being unavoidable and essential ...full, true, and undivided allegiance to the nation, and the laws of the nation whose lands he holds.

This would have brought together national independence, public ownership of natural resources, and cultural pluralism, all as the one revolutionary goal. The modern struggle in the north cannot be dismissed as merely 'sectarian' (when in fact it is the war of the landless and jobless against the possessing classes – a thoroughly Lalorian concept), unless one is also ready to reject any connection between it and the current agitations in the south against the EEC and the multinationals, as well as the dear food/cheap food conflict and the urban-v-agricultural taxation controversies. Mr Bew never mentions these 26-county problems, and thus deprives his view of the Provos, and of the legacy of the Land League, of any plausible context, historical or contemporary.

If Mr Bew's main concern is the structure of agricultural society, Professor Larkin provides its complement – an examination of church and state relations over the immediately subsequent period. Methods of Irish resistance and British response to Irish resistance do not change very much. When William O'Brien, editor of the *United Irishman* and a member of Parnell's Irish Party, was arrested at the time of the Land War, he fiercely withstood the attempt of the authorities to make him wear prison uniform. Archbishop Croke

rallied the hierarchy to send a signed protest complaining about his savage treatment ...It is not only in such details that this extremely lively book seems so vividly up to date. Its main theme is the way in whch the British Government, upset by seeing the Irish rural Bishops forced by popular pressure to support the land agitation, sought from the Vatican an external authority to prevent this and offered Catholic control of higher education as a lure. The ensuing manoeuvrings between the Church and the Irish Party became exceedingly complicated: with the end result that even though Parnell himself was broken, the Irish Party was strengthened, as was also the relationship between state and church in Ireland (the Irish Party becoming the unofficial embryo of the present 26-county arrangement). British governments have always understood, what their 'no-popery' middle-class supporters (Gladstone's phrase) have not, that there has been constant tension between Irish rural bishops and the Vatican, and that the Vatican has always been more committed to good relations with Britain than

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with Ireland. Hence the odd attitude of the British media and politicians towards the recent papal visit – how anxious they all were that Pope John Paul's authority (un-English but okay for his own crowd. . .) should be exerted effectively upon 'his' Ireland to suit whatever direction they wanted the country ('their' Ireland, as well) to be headed in! And how little attention was paid by our modern no-popery socialist factions to the discreet dinner parties at the Papal Legate's (in Wimbledon) where official diplomatic status for the Legate was put forward as a quid-pro-quo against the Pope's guaranteed silence upon the scandal of the H-blocks. Professor Larkin's pages shed a great deal of light on last year's convolutions – not least in his demonstration of how the Irish Bishops had to channel the land agitation into the constitutional current of the Irish Party (cf. the present posture of the SDLP): and thereby gained themselves a permanent position of strength in Irish politics. At the same time, the revolutionary tradition remained uncrushed, though divorced from the clerical-constitutional bloc it had so nearly been able to combine with.

There was little change in this position until very recently, as is shown in Professor Lee's stimulating compilation of RTE annual radio lectures, for the first time devoted to a thoroughly modern theme, and including one by Dr Cornelius O'Leary, on the North, which was not broadcast. The writers unanimously agree that Irish society has absolutely transformed itself since the war – living standards, for example, rose by 50 per cent, the population grew by over 100,000; and church-state relations changed more rapidly than in any similar length of time since the Reformation – a formal separation in fact being established by referendum shortly after the period of the book.

Main areas of change have been the immense growth of consciousness of national sovereignty and of Ireland's international voice in the UN and elsewhere. The relation of the people to the state, and the use by the public of the Constitution and its legalities – appeals to the Supreme Court, and to the European Court, on such matters as marriage-laws, contraception, censorship, etc. – has suddenly become a factor of great urgency for politicians. Also industrialisation, the development of mineral resources, and the inroads of the multi-nationals, have totally changed the landscape of commerce and class-conflict. A quote from the essay on 'The Farmers' (Maurice Manning) is applicable to all aspects of the national life:

> But more and more this consultation is taking place outside Parliament, involving the pressure groups who have become the real powers in Irish society . . .without whose consent effective government is not possible.

The contribution on censorship by Douglas Gageby of the *Irish Times* is disappointing and superficial for so important a theme – perhaps predictable in an RTE-sponsored series . . .

Kenneth Neill's lavish picture-book seems to be directed at the emigrant Irish bourgeoisie, with a comforting text full of clichés about the conservative and priest-ridden nature of the society, the poverty of the country, etc. Irish readers abroad would remain complacently befuddled as to what is really happening to their homeland.

Yet with all their differing prejudices these five books, taken together, do present a strong picture of a people whose vitality and life-force are undiminished by repeated coercion and violence: and one cannot but read them with a sense of expectant optimism. Alas, the combined cost puts them out of reach of ordinary law-abiding citizens. If the writers and editors were all to push the British government to agree to the demands of the Irish political prisoners for (among other things) access to literature and the opportunity to debate it, they would certainly find an appreciative and effective readership.

Mark Elvin

A Sense of Separation

An Unfinished History of the World by HUGH THOMAS *Hamish Hamilton* £12.50

The world-historian has to be a soul-traveller. Historians who survey a more limited field usually have an affinity with a certain culture or period, which selects them almost as much as they select it. The world-historian can have no such partiality. He must know in his heart just as certainly why the philosopher Chuang-tzu refused office as why Rabbi Akiba accepted martyrdom, men of two utterly different worlds and minds. Somehow, he must feel an equal empathy with each, while keeping the distinctions sharp. Most men, outside limited communities in space and time, have been strangers to one another's beliefs and affections. Any world history that is not suffused, even haunted, by a sense of this separation (perhaps because the author is motivated by faith in a common humanity) is a falsification.

It is this insight that justifies Spengler's *Decline of the West*, in spite of its pretentious obfuscations. The self-sufficiency of classical Mediterranean sculpture, the soul that looks out from early Christian funeral portraiture, the will in a post-Renaissance face that engages you with its glance – whether one agrees or not, one's feeling for the singularity of different ages is the more acute for having been exposed to his vision. His account of Western mathematics, and its shift from a fear of the infinite, the intangible, and the incommensurable to a fascination with them, is a remarkable anticipation of Kuhn's analysis of scientific revolutions. He was not wholly wrong when he said that 'the history of humanity has no meaning whatever and that deep significances reside only in the life-courses of the separate cultures'.

The world-historian also needs a sense of distance. The present, said Spengler, must be regarded just as something infinitely distant and alien is regarded, and treated as an interval of time neither more nor less significant in the whole picture of history than others. H. G. Wells, who wrote from a different perspective that saw humanity as a whole, had an equal freedom from chronological bias. 'Half the duration of human civilisation,' he wrote, 'and the keys to all its chief institutions are to be found *before* Sargon I,' that is, by the beginning of the third millennium BC. His words remain a rebuke to the temporal parochialism of the history courses offered by too many British universities.

The world-historian must also build upon some conceptual framework of cause and effect. Otherwise what he chooses to discuss out of the wealth of information provided by modern scholarship will constitute no more than history *en brochette*: facts, observations, and *bons mots* impaled together on whatever intellectual skewer comes most readily to hand. The first example of a workable world-historical framework is that of Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddimah*, written in the 14th century. His interpretation of the past, morale and ideas as well as material life, is in terms of the cyclical interaction of the peoples of the desert and the peoples of the densely-settled areas. The analytical problems that face a modern successor are of course much greater. The teasing-out of broad patterns of probable causation can only be done through comparisons, but what are the proper spatial and temporal units, even the proper terms, for such analysis? What is a legitimate comparison? For example, is it illuminating or misleading to argue that amoral, ultra-realist political philosophies typically emerge at times of fluctuating political fragmentation within an overall cultural unity, and to instance as proof of this the *Han-fei-tzu*, the *Arthasastra* attributed to Kautilya, and Machiavelli's *Principe*? Toynbee's demonstration of the inadequacy of history written in national units is unanswerable. But is there some usable larger unit? If so, how is it to be defined in extent and duration? Any serious effort at world history has to face such problems, or be at the mercy of momentary inspirations that jump back and forth across centuries and cultures like grasshoppers.

Professor Thomas's *Unfinished History of the World* fails on every single one of the above counts. He has little feeling for the gulf between the thoughts and values of different times and cultures. 'The Greek philosophical imagination,' he writes, 'anticipated every problem of religion.' Every! Compare Spengler's 'There are no eternal questions'. He is lopsided in chronological coverage. Wells, in my edition of *The Outline of History*, has 698 pages before the Renaissance. Thomas, in a work of two-thirds the length, has 168. He is so Europe-centred that the book does not deserve its title as world history. The argument is decked out with names like the First Emperor of Ch'in and Hammurabi, but the structures of the non-European histories are not taken seriously.

This last is particularly damaging as regards the casual and often inaccurate treatment of China. Out of 14 pages of bibliography, there are seven works on China. This is derisory homework for a civilisation whose complexity and documentation are only slightly less than those of Europe as a whole, and which was between AD 600 and AD 1600 the world's most advanced society by almost every criterion of economic performance, technology, administrative sophistication, and scientific understanding. As for Japan, not even Sir

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George Sansom's standard three-volume history is listed.

The damage goes deeper than the relative neglect of a quarter of the world's population. In many respects the Chinese and Japanese experiences were close to and yet divergent from those of Europe. Obvious examples are the social impact of printing and firearms. There are many others, including the early powered mechanisation of silk-throwing (in Bologna and Lucca, and in north-eastern China, both in the later 13th century). If one contrasts 17th-century 'theatres of machines and instruments' in Europe and China, the Europeans appear by comparison playful, somewhat impractical, wasteful of materials and labour-power, and possessors of an abstract, almost X-ray, way of seeing machines. The West remains more of a mystery than it need be if we do not examine why another society that was commercialised, inventive, urbanised, possibly even more literate and numerate, and with a relatively rational dominant ideology, and excellent water communications, would never have developed on its own, so far as can be seen, to a condition resembling western modernisation.

Professor Thomas has no general conceptual framework, but his approach may be described as 'neo-materialism'. Its progenitors are Braudel, Cipolla, Landes, and McNeill. He is fascinated with the effects of the techniques of production, warfare, communications, and medicine. The chapters on the last three centuries are a rich catalogue of inventions and institutions, often with wry comments attached. The rise of distilling in the seventeenth century led to an increase in drunkenness. Television, 'in the tyrannies of the future, will clearly play a decisive part in ensuring the subservience of the masses'. Humanity 'will be saved from famine by fish (rather) than by land reform'. And so on.

No attempt is made to examine the deeper currents of the mind and the sensibilities, or to ask how these were related to the transformations of everyday existence. There is an 18th century without Bach, a 19th without Beethoven, a 20th without Schoenberg. All we are told is that 'music began to lose its way when it became a purely individual performance instead of being related to the carnivals and rituals of society'. One of the most distinctive developments in recent Western thought has been the mind turning in upon itself and examining critically its own constructions. Yet three of the four creators of non-Euclidean geometry, Bolyai, Lobachewski, and Riemann, are absent from these pages. Gauss makes it, but not as a mathematician (!). Likewise missing are Heisenberg's indeterminacy principle and Gödel's incompleteness theorem, two ideas that are the culmination of this trend towards a more rigorous intellectual self-awareness. We are told of atomic power, but not of Einstein or relativity. Computers appear, their genesis unexplained. Of Frege, Russell (as a logician), Turing, or von Neumann there is not a word. What sort of a conception of recent history is this?

Part of the answer is that, in the last third of his book, Professor Thomas is writing a tract for the times. His abiding anxieties are the decline of personal freedom, the rise of oppressive state power backed by a new technological sophistication, and the deceptive lure of revolutionary ideology and revolutionary action which have when successful, he believes, always made life harsher in the end than it would otherwise have been. As a tract it is level-headed, and the judgments those of a moderate, humane, and sceptical conservative.

As history, this last part is slightly slapdash. Typical is the remark that 'Russian industrialism had always been sponsored by the state.' This is nearly true, but overlooks both the early private enterprise described by Blackwell and, more importantly, the consumer-led boom of 1908 to 1913, unique in Russian economic history, as Mackay and Portal have pointed out. A similar sort of oversimplification is to see the triumph of Mao as simply due to 'greater military skill'. Military skill was important, but so was patriotic propaganda (Johnson), the creation of a new type of army (Whitson), devious united front work (Van Slyke), the better administration of base areas (Schwartz and others), and the formation of a large CCP whose inner dynamics were different from those of the CPSU (Compton, Lewis, and others). The true complexities and ironies are blurred. Russia by 1916 had a more-or-less complete modern economy in embryo (Sutton), much of it dismantled in the chaos that followed 1917. The Chinese revolution seemed as desirable to most Chinese in 1949 as it seemed doubtful by 1959 and disastrous by 1969.

The criticisms in this review may seem ungenerous, given the immensity of the task. I think rather that they should serve as a reminder that a world-historian has to possess quite extraordinary capacities, and that those who have performed with distinction in more limited fields may still be ill-equipped for so enormous an enterprise.

John Berger

Words I

(for Beverly)

Down the gorge
ran
people and blood

In the braken
beyond touch
a dog howled

A head between lips
opened
the mouth of the world

Her breasts
like doves
perch on her ribs

Her child sucks the long
white thread
of words to come

Words II

the tongue
is the spine's first leaf
forests of language surround it

like a mole
the tongue
burrows through the earth of speech

like a bird
the tongue
flies in arcs of the written word

the tongue is tethered and alone in its mouth

Employment and basic needs in Portugal
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Peter Burke

Inspired Melancholy

The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age by FRANCES YATES *Routledge* £7.75

In 1533 the German magician Henry Cornelius Agrippa published a survey of his art entitled *The Occult Philosophy*. Dame Frances Yates has borrowed Agrippa's title for her own absorbing survey of christian Cabala. It covers a good deal of the same ground as some of her earlier books, but it also has new and important things to say.

Cabala, an esoteric Jewish tradition, is not easy to define. The celebrated humanist Giovanni Pico della Morandola, a leading christian exponent of the tradition, described it as the art of combining Hebrew letters and as 'a way of capturing the powers of superior things'. Agrippa was if anything even more obscure. Neither of these scholars wanted to profane the mysteries for the benefit of casual readers. Frances Yates has no objections to popularisation, but her own description of Cabala remains a little elusive: 'elaborate manipulation of the Hebrew alphabet... a method of religious contemplation which could... pass into a kind of religious magic'.

Like Agrippa, Dr Yates divides her book into three parts. The third part is a brief coda on Rosicrucianism (treated at length in her *Rosicrucian Enlightenment*), the return of the Jews to England in the 17th century, and on Milton as a christian cabalist. The first, introductory part is a brief history of the occult philosophy in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, overlapping to some extent with her *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition,* but written for a wider audience. Both books have chapters on Pico and Agrippa. The new book also includes studies of the German humanist Johannes Reuchlin (author of a book on *The Art of Cabala*), and the Venetian friar Francesco Giorgi, whose massive folio on *The Harmony of the Universe* includes what he calls a 'mystical' or allegorical interpretation of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Dr Yates also offers us a fascinating new interpretation of Dürer's famous engraving *Melencolia*, with its mysterious brooding winged figure, in terms of the ideas of Agrippa on magic and ecstasy, arguing (against the late Erwin Panofsky, whose decoding of the engraving has become generally accepted), that the main figure is not in 'a state of depressed inactivity', but rather in 'an intense visionary trance'.

However, the core of this new book is the discussion of Elizabethan England, or more exactly, of the 1590s, in Part Two, which devotes eight chapters to Spenser, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Chapman, and, emphatically not least, to the Elizabethan magus and christian cabalist Dr John Dee.

Frances Yates suggests that the occult philosophy was 'the dominant philosophy of the Elizabethan age'. More specifically, she argues that Francesco Giorgi was 'a major influence on Spenser'; that Marlowe's Faustus is 'an unfavourable reference to Dee', while Shakespeare's Prospero is a favourable one; and that Chapman's poem *The Shadow of Night* – a poem as obscure as its subject – is at once a defence of the occult philosophy against Marlowe's recent attack and a description of inspired melancholy which follows the tradition of Agrippa and Dürer. Thus the occult philosophy flourished in Elizabethan England, while in Catholic Europe it came under attack as part of 'the Counter-Reformation attempt to suppress the Renaissance'.

This is heady stuff. As always, Frances Yates finds ideas intensely exciting and communicates her excitement to the reader. It is easy to be swept away and to take all her assertions equally seriously. To do this would be a mistake. The problem with scholars who reach their conclusions in an essentially intuitive manner is to distinguish the really illuminating intuitions from others which are less good. Dame Frances scores some bull's eyes, but other shots are surely off-target.

To begin with some minor points. The idea that the Lorenzo-Jessica scene in *The Merchant of Venice* was inspired by Giorgi's *Harmony of the Universe* seems a little far-fetched, given that the notion of the music of the spheres was, as the author herself admits, a traditional commonplace. When Marlowe's Mephistopheles appears in the habit of a friar, Dr Yates sees another reference to Giorgi, although the obvious association of ideas for a London audience around 1594 would surely have been with the magician Friar Bacon, recently portrayed, complete with references to 'Cabalisme', by Robert Greene.

Not all readers will be convinced by the claim that the occult philosophy was 'the dominant philosophy' in Elizabethan times. Dominant among whom?

There are also difficulties with the notion, central to this book, that the occult philosophy was a movement of religious reform which was uprooted by what Dr Yates calls 'the Catholic reaction', and especially by the Jesuits, while continuing to flourish in English Protestant soil. Despite the placing of occult books on the Index of 1564, some Catholics in France, Spain, and Italy, including some Jesuits, remained enthusiasts for the subject. Giorgi's interests in Hebrew studies and in the hidden symbolism of architectural proportions were shared, for example, by Juan de Herrera, the architect of the Escorial, whose library reveals his interest in the occult, and by Juan Bautista Villalpando, a Jesuit who attempted to reconstruct the appearance of the Temple of Solomon at Jerusalem. Conversely, there was a strong current of Protestant suspicion of the occult, a suspicion expressed in the German *Faustbuch* of 1587 as well as in Marlowe's *Faustus*.

Finally, the general idea of a 'Rosicrucian philosophy', and the specific idea of Bacon's New Atlantis as a 'christian cabalist utopia' have come in for some severe criticisms of late, and it is a pity to see the criticisms ignored and the ideas simply reiterated.

Where *The Occult Philosophy*, like its author's earlier books, really scores, thanks to Dr Yate's amazing learning, is in its juxtaposition of unfamiliar with familiar images and texts, juxtapositions which prompt all sorts of reinterpretations. Dürer, Chapman and Spenser in particular will never look quite the same again. The old enchantress has not lost her power.

Nicholas Shrimpton

Seizing By The Neck

Early in the Summer of 1970 by A. B. YEHOSHUA *Heinemann* £5.50
Uncle by JULIA MARKUS *Macdonald General* £4.95
Wrinkles by CHARLES SIMMONS *Alison Press/Secker* £4.95
Monkey Grip by HELEN GARNER *Virago* £5.95

Marriages are made in Heaven. The families which spring from them, by contrast, appear to be the product of some wholly-owned subsidiary of Hell. That, at least, is the opinion of the contemporary novel, which has recently been assembling and categorising the varieties of domestic pain with the meticulous thoroughness of a stamp collector. Even Israeli fiction, which might seem to have grander subjects under its hand, shares the tendency to turn from the workplace and the battlefield to the dolorous events of the life of the hearth.

Two of the three short stories in A.B. Yehoshua's new collection illustrate this preoccupation very vividly. 'Missile Base 612' actually uses the war in the Middle East as the image of a private unhappiness. The hero, a middle-aged philosophy don, has managed to get himself transferred from his conventional army-reserve unit to a special section of itinerant lecturers and flies, on the day of the story, deep into Sinai to give a morale-boosting talk. The journey is a sequence of petty humiliations. At the camp only four men attend his lecture, the others choosing instead to watch a film. But he is not disconsolate. Out in the dark, between mess hall and company office, he has put his hand on one of the great missiles which Base 612 operates. With power like this, he feels, there can never be

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war again. It is back with his family, in Tel Aviv, that this comforting illusion is destroyed. His wife, who wants a divorce, offers her customary frigidity. Privation is 'endless', hostility 'unchanging'. Their young son, simultaneously neglected and fought over, inhabits an even crueller battlefield than the missile unit in their desert bunker. 'In the end', reflects the hero, 'they'll kill him between them'.

Neither of the other tales in *Early in the Summer of 1970* has quite this scope or this degree of ironic complexity. The title story is a more straightforward study of an elderly schoolmaster whose profound, but impersonal, concern for Israel's war dead is transformed into madness when he is mistakenly informed of his own son's death in the Jordan Valley. 'The Last Commander' is a brief fable in which a reserve unit on manoeuvres, under the command of a ghostly Captain Yagnon, rejects the military life and sleeps out its tour of duty in a hidden valley. The volume as a whole does, none the less, give a remarkable glimpse into the private life of a nation pressed upon by war. The translations, by Miriam Arad and Pauline Shrier, are not always felicitous and 'Heavily does this fearful land seize me by the neck' is one of Ms Arad's very worst moments. But that feeling, better expressed, is precisely what A.B. Yehoshua is giving shape to.

Julia Markus has no need of literal warfare to sharpen her sense of familial conflict. *Uncle* is the story of Irv Bender, a Jewish boy in Jersey City who decides to devote himself to giving his idolised younger brother a suitable start in life. Babe is kept at school and sent to college, Babe is found a smart job in a prosperous firm. Unfortunately Babe is both weak-willed and unintelligent, and the shrewdly energetic Irv is saddled with a permanent responsibility. Even when Irv discovers that this enthusiasm for protecting helpless young men is the expression of a suppressed homosexuality, his parasitical family interferes with the free expression of his feelings. The novel is written in very short sentences. Jerkily. Like this. Its real weakness, however, is less the awkwardness of its attempt to catch the speech patterns of New Jersey Jewry than the change of direction which it makes three quarters of the way through. By the end it should be called *Niece* rather than *Uncle*. Ms Markus becomes preoccupied with the life and feelings of Babe's daughter, and a belated attempt to present the family's troubles as an image of American history cannot disguise the damage which the shift of focus does to the book.

The autobiographical impulse which, I suspect, lurks in *Uncle* is even stronger in *Wrinkles*. Charles Simmons, however, has come up with an original way in which to present his familiar topic. Instead of offering linear narrative he has organised his hero's experiences thematically. Each of the 44 short chapters presents a complete account of his attitude to such things as sex, religion, parents, death, the army, taste in clothes and mathematics. The result of this literary experiment is, sadly, the predictable discovery that when a book is written like an inventory it reads like an inventory. Individual vignettes can be impressive. The hero's view of the world is a sour one and Simmons provides him with a suitable repertoire of cynical aphorisms. When he learns to ride, for example, he 'will admire the mass and power of horses but despise their peevishness and servility'. But *Wrinkles* is sharp rather than profound, and when the comments are upon the hero's kith and kin it is sometimes hard to distinguish disillusionment from malice.

Helen Garner's subject in *Monkey Grip* is not the traditional hearth and home but the neo-extended family of the commune. In the Down-Under underground culture of modern Melbourne the former hippies are feeling their way, tentatively, into middle-age. Children are reared and schooled, stretch marks are coped with. Against this background the heroine, Nora, conducts an ill-starred love affair with a junkie called Javo. The soporific self-absorption of the drug culture is here partially redeemed by a colourful descriptive manner and a lively ear for dialogue. The central question, however, is whether the new kind of kinship enables people to like and support each other more than they did in the old-fashioned family. The answer takes an unconscionably long time to arrive. And what do you think? It's no.

Anthony Arblaster

Red Decade?

Culture and Crisis in Britain in the Thirties edited by Jon Clark, Margot Heinemann, David Margolies & Carole Snee *Lawrence & Wishart* £7.50

Extreme Situations: Literature and Crisis from the Great War to the Atom Bomb by DAVID CRAIG & MICHAEL EGAN *Macmillan* £11.50 & £5.50

John Stuart Mill was right. It is a good thing to re-examine accepted opinions from time to time, if only to see if they stand up when leant upon. What then should we make of the conventional view of the 1930s as a red (or at least pink) decade? Isn't it time it was discarded?

This, after all, was the decade in which Hitler and Franco joined Mussolini and Salazar among the fascist rulers of Europe. Czechoslovakia and Austria disappeared into the Third Reich, the Spanish Republic was destroyed, and the decade ended in total war against Japanese as well as German expansionism. It was hardly a good time for the British Labour movement either. Trade union membership, which stood at 4.3 million on the eve of the General Strike, fell by one million in the next eight years. After MacDonald's sell-out in 1931 the Labour Party was out of office for the rest of the decade, and did humiliatingly badly in the general elections of 1931 and 1935. There were 2.5 million people registered as unemployed at the beginning of the decade, and around 1.5 million when war broke out at its end. And, despite Jarrow and other dramatic protests, this evoked despair rather than active anger. Orwell, attending a National Unemployed Workers Movement social in Wigan, noted with regret 'There is no *turbulence* left in England.' What turbulence there was, it could be argued, was being channelled into Mosley's British Union of Fascists.

At the most obvious political levels, then, the Thirties was a period of defeats and demoralisation for the European Left; and some of those defeats, such as the destruction of the German Communist Party, were permanent. Whence, then, the pervasive image of a red decade?

Regrettably, neither of these books explicitly calls that image into question. Yet the *Culture and Crisis* collection does supply a kind of answer. There *was* a revival of the Left in Britain, largely outside the Labour Party, from the mid-Thirties. Union membership began to grow again after 1933, and the Communist Party, which had a mere 2,500 members in 1930, had 17,500 by 1939, and 56,000 in 1942. (Most of these figures are taken from the late James Klugmann's introductory essay.) And then there was that extraordinary phenomenon, the Left Book Club, which had 58,000 members by 1939, and was, as Betty Reid makes plain, far more then a collection of avid readers.

But what above all has given the decade its conventional reputation was the emergence, on an unprecedented scale, of a culture of the Left. It is the literary dimension of this culture

POLITICAL TERROR

is the subject of *Terror or Love?* by Bommi Baumann, a much-wanted German terrorist, still in hiding. It documents how young Germans get involved in illegal movements and what it is like to fight society, what they do and why. This important book is crucial to an understanding of a vital modern problem and Heinrich Böll and Daniel Cohn-Bendt contribute statements to show that there are two sides to understand. (£5.95 & £2.50 paper). Two unusual books take a new look at theatre as art and catalyst. Jeff Nuttall's *Performance Art* (Vol. 1. Memoirs. Vol. 2. Scripts) gives theory and practice. Street theatre, theatre in factories, telephone novels, happenings, mixed media art and the scripts and scenarios are all present from one of Britain's foremost innovators, always human, provocative and compassionate. (each vol £6.95 hardcover, £3.50 paperback. Illustrated) Eva Figes' *Tragedy & Social Evolution,* a study of the relationship between classical drama and primitive death rituals as a method of controlling social unrest, is now in paperback (£2.95).

LITERARY TERROR

well describes William Burroughs' *Ah Pook Is Here,* a cautionary novel followed by two other texts, from the former pope of the American beat writers, now leader of the international avant-garde, illustrating the endless human tension between political control and human pleasure. (£5.95). Two important classics from German are now available: Goethe's great novel Wilhelm Meister is in two parts. The first is now available in a new translation by H. M. Waidson *The Years of Apprenticeship* (3 vols £5.95 each). 'A new translation of Wilhelm Meister must be most welcome . . . Professor Waidson is good at conveying the flighty flirtatiousness . . .'

— *New Statesman*. Gotthelf's important parable of horror *The Black Spider* is just republished (£5.95 & £2.50). *Gambit 33-34,* a special issue on the Polish theatre (£3.00) and *Journal of Beckett Studies No. 5* (£3.00) also available.

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which is best known – Samuel Hynes's *The Auden Generation*. So it is good that *Culture and Crisis* contains two articles on theatre and two on cinema, two of them being the recollections of leading participants, André van Gyseghem and Ralph Bond. There was a lot going on. It wasn't just Unity Theatre and a few Grierson documentaries. Jon Clark tells us that by the late Thirties there were around 300 'Left' theatre groups 'performing plays and sketches to labour movement audiences all over Britain'.

Music remains a relatively unexplored dimension of this culture. *Culture and Crisis* includes a handful of references to Britten and Alan Bush, but none to Tippett, who was even, very briefly, a member of the CP in 1935. It seems clear that the social concerns and the pacifism of both Britten and Tippett, which permeate much of their later music, have their roots in the Left culture of the Thirties. We need to know more about it. And the same might be said of contemporary movements in architecture and design, massively featured in the recent exhibition at the Hayward Gallery. Clear links were being made between aesthetic modernism and political radicalism.

But it is the literary culture which is the focus of this collection, and which has inspired its two best contributions. Iain Wright's essay on Leavis and *Scrutiny* in the Thirties is a model of its kind, clearly argued and most carefully documented. Wright contends, convincingly to my mind, that 'Leavis was always and primarily a political writer, most of all when he claimed not to be'. *Scrutiny*'s ambivalent hostility to Marxism revealed both how much the two positions had in common, and how clearly Leavis and his colleagues perceived Marxism as *the* alternative position of social criticism. As Wright says, it was in part 'the raw state of much English Marxist cultural theory' of the Thirties which served to prevent a genuine dialogue developing.

Peter Widdowson's survey of English fiction in the Thirties is a more adventurous, and so less immediately cogent, piece than Wright's. But the risks he takes pay off with some remarkable insights. The traditionally liberal individualist form of the novel had to cope with what Isherwood called the 'fantastic realities' of the present. In a few illuminating pages Widdowson shows how deeply this problem penetrated the work of writers as different as Virginia Woolf, Edward Upward, Graham Greene and Isherwood himself. It is something of a *tour de force*, in which a grasp of theory and political perspective are combined with a sensitive attention to particular texts.

The same, alas, cannot be said of David Craig and Michael Egan's *Extreme Situations*. This, as its title and subtitle imply, is a wide-ranging survey of literary, and largely fictional, responses to a variety of the more spectacularly dreadful experiences of the first half of the 20th century.

It is not difficult, I think, to see how a book on such a theme could be made to cohere. For surely the very extremity of these experiences constitutes the essence of the problem; how can mere art or writing measure up to, or 'contain', the realities of Auschwitz, the Gulag and total war? But Craig and Egan for much of the time don't seem to think there is a problem. 'In our world', they tell us, 'the facts are so starkly striking that they can express and dramatise themselves with the least help from the artist.' And of the 30 million dead of the second world war they say confidently 'Mortality on this colossal scale was likely to call out the supreme creative efforts that result in masterpieces . . .' The 'masterpieces' they have in mind are *The Naked and the Dead*, *Catch-22*, and *Slaughterhouse Five*.

Yet elsewhere they write of Vonnegut that his idiom 'is finely adjusted to suggesting the great difficulty of dealing with the worst things'. And of the Soviet forced-labour camps they admit 'there is no way of making real to oneself the colossal swarm of agony that such figures represent'. But because they do not apparently see the need to make this dilemma the core of their book, it degenerates into a catalogue of works which have, in one way or another, dealt with these 'extreme situations'. No criteria are given for the inclusion or exclusion of any particular work. Certainly it is not provided by 'the idea of literature as evidence which underlies this book.' Writers are frequently praised for 'telling it like it was', as if that was a simple, self-explanatory notion. Lukács is quoted on one occasion, but no use is made of his highly relevant distinction between realism and naturalism.

Their discussion of particular works is often sensitive and illuminating, in particular the literature of war, and it is salutary for English readers to have their attention directed to the virtues of writers like Silone, Victor Serge and Arturo Barea. But many of their incidental judgments – on, for example, Hardy, Woolf, and Greene – are extraordinarily crude and conventional, particularly when compared with what Widdowson has to say about the latter two novelists.

Craig and Egan admit that they 'are not attempting a systematic theory'. But the lesson I draw from their book is that sensitivity and political commitment, without at least a *grasp* of general and theoretical issues, are Not Enough. *Extreme Situations* unwittingly demonstrates the limits of empiricism.

Stuart Holland

Beyond the Vicious Circle

Farewell to Revolution by S. F. KISSIN *Weidenfeld* £6.50

Capitalism and Catastrophe by STEPHEN ROUSSEAS *Cambridge* £8.95

Karl Kautsky and the Socialist Revolution by MASSIMO SALVADORI *New Left Books* £9.50

Karl Marx edited by Tom Bottomore *Blackwell* £9.95 & £3.50

Marx and Marxism have already proved as different in practice as Christ and Christianity. To approve the sermon on the mount is no more to endorse the Spanish Inquisition than sympathy for the *Communist Manifesto* means support for Stalin's purges.

Ironically, in an otherwise penetrating and provocative analysis comparing what he calls 'Marxianity' with religion, S. F. Kissin misses such basic distinctions. His general argument, in this respect, is not new. It has already been made by Jacques Maritain and Niebuhr, whom he cites, and Tucker, with whom he seems less familiar.

Kissin castigates genuflection in favour of dialectical materialism or 'diamat', comparing its 'triad' with the Christian concept of the Trinity, and tracking Engels's unwiser sorties into physical science. But he neglects the extent to which a new generation of Marxists has focussed its interest not in 'diamat', which he himself admits was neither coined nor minted by Marx himself, but in other areas of Marx's methodology. The concept of alienation, for example, emerging from translation of the young Marx of the *Early Writings*, and the 'middle Marx' of the *Grundrisse*, was analysed in depth 20 years ago by a Catholic priest such as Calvez, yet does not rank a mention in Kissin's index.

Kissin's *Farewell to Revolution* is somewhat one-handed, if not premature, not least granted recent events in South East Asia or current Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. However, his book is not simply Cold War rhetoric. On the issue of Soviet expansionism, he stresses that, save for nine years between 1939 and 1948, the Soviet Union was mainly defensive rather than aggressive. Even her annexations following the Nazi-Soviet Pact could be seen as pre-emptive defence. Certainly the current lamentable incursion in force in Afghanistan needs to be judged against this long-standing international caution, stressed by Kissin. It still is arguable that the last thing the Soviet Union needs today is a war on three fronts, with NATO in Europe, China on her back door, and an unholy alliance of Islam and the United States on her underbelly.

Kissin himself admits that what now are widely known as the 'EuroCommunist' parties of Western Europe have evolved positions on reform and revolution which are distinct from the Soviet model, with a conversion to legal and parliamentary methods in the transition to socialism which shows every sign of being genuine.

The new independence is clearly marked, as Kissin also stresses, in the evolution of the State Monopoly Capitalism thesis within several Western European Communist parties. This analysis, which first surfaced publicly in a conference at Choisy-le-Roi in May 1966, amounts superficially to a contradiction of the forecasts of impending capitalist crisis, as widely assumed to have been argued in determinist manner by both Marx and the second generation Marxists. Put simply, it is construed as arguing – in the face of the postwar capitalist recovery – that capitalism can to some degree after all be managed, and thus may survive.

Such questions on the manageability and potential survival of capitalism have been well put by Stephen Rousseas, in an interesting and well reasoned book. Basing his analysis in the theories of crisis of the second generation Marxists, especially Rosa Luxemburg and Bukharin, Rousseas advances beyond contemporary 'limits to growth' theory of the kind popularised (or vulgarised) by the Club

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of Rome and stresses the issue of limits to *capital*-ist growth.

Rousseas shows that for Marx himself, the demise of capitalism was not perceived as a strictly objective necessity. It would depend on a dialectical combination of objective tendency to crisis and the subjective reaction to such crisis of social groups and classes. Forcefully quoting, *inter alia*, from the *Theories of Surplus Value* and the *Grundrisse*, he cites Marx as writing that 'when Adam Smith explains the fall in the rate of profit from an over-abundance of capital . . . he is speaking of a permanent effect and this is wrong . . . Permanent crises do not exist'. Not least, Rousseas shows Marx's awareness of the tremendous force of technology as a factor of production, even to the point of arguing that with future application of science to the economy direct labour disappears as the determinant principle of production . . . (and) labour time ceases and must cease to be its measure.

The limits of Keynes's analysis of crisis, as has been argued by several of us for some time, lie in his focus on the problem of under-consumption as a recurrent trend within the system. This could be at least partly offset, as Rosa Luxemburg claimed, by expansion into foreign markets, and by war. Keynes argued that such imperialist conquest could be avoided by State intervention at home and the provision of sufficient domestic demand through budgetary and fiscal policies.

Rightly enough, Rousseas shows that neither Marx nor second generation Marxists such as Bukharin limited their analysis of capitalist crisis to under-consumption. The latter, with Hilferding, in turn profoundly influenced Lenin in his theory of imperialism. Both Hilferding and Bukharin stressed that big business in Europe before the first world war had invoked the intervention of the State to help offset the irrationality and disproportion of an unplanned market system.

In practice, Bukharin was stressing an element in capitalist crisis – incoherence and disproportion – which Marx himself had introduced in the context of a complementary trend to technological unemployment. In Marx's own words, this occurred through the rising organic and technical composition of capital, or more simply the increase in capital and equipment per worker through technical progress. In his own time, such technical progress had mainly been in new processes rather than new products. Thereafter, however, as Schumpeter emphasised, capitalism profited from major waves of innovation in entirely new industries.

Marx himself, in *Capital* volume I, has laid great stress on the dynamism of capital during a phase of new innovation, with high rates of accumulation and new employment. But such expansion cannot be assured through market forces in a balanced manner. Any rapid accumulation will tend to fall off and weaken, combining 'vicious circle' effects for the system unless offset by other factors. Imperialist foreign expansion was just such a factor for some of the second generation Marxists. State intervention in the pattern of demand and supply – rather than simply Keynes's stress on the level of demand – was another.

It is such intervention which the State Monopoly Capitalism thesis has stressed in recent years. It shares a direct enough descent from earlier elements in Marxist analysis. But while the thesis has this much consistency, it nonetheless is a pandora's box in political terms. For the ability of State intervention to modify or offset trends to crisis within capitalism challenges not only the vulgar Marxist emphasis on the State as mainly *repressive* of the working class, it also opens the prospect that such a State, intervening essentially to maintain both profit and *consensus* support, may bring real economic gains to most working people and thus forestall transition to socialism. In short, reforms within capitalism may postpone or frustrate revolution.

Massimo Salvadori, in an important and authoritative analysis of Kautsky, has shown that the issues raised today by EuroCommunism have a direct lineage in Marxist analysis earlier in this century. In fact, before Gramsci was imprisoned by Italian fascism, Kautsky had argued that Marxist analysis was not a one-way road leading to the rejection of 'bourgeois' democracy and violent revolution on the Leninist model. Kautsky's arguments were unambiguous. As he put it:

> Democracy and socialism do not differ in the sense that one is a means and one an end; both are means to the same end. By modern socialism we mean not only a social organisation of production, but also a democratic organisation of society. . . There is no socialism without democracy.

The parallels with Berlinguer or Carillo are outstanding. In one sense, the wheel has turned full circle, back from the Moscow dominated Third International to a form of Marxist reasoning on the economy, State and society much closer to the framework of the Second International before the first world war. Then, many Marxists considered Marx as a founding father rather than the source of all wisdom, as a point of departure for new reasoning. But if this is the case, how does modern Marxism of the kind espoused by the EuroCommunists differ from social democracy in its economic analysis or political platform? For if the State Monopoly Capitalism thesis maintains that capitalism can offset crisis through public intervention, and if 'we are all democrats' now, where does the real difference lie?

Potentially, Tom Bottomore's edited volume *Karl Marx* could have faced such contemporary questions and posed some alternative answers. It includes some classic contributions by Schumpeter, Lukács, Lichtheim and Miliband among its selected essays. But most of these are dated re-issues or extracts from basic texts, rather than combined with more recent contributions by younger authors. It would have been useful to include, for instance, some extracts from one of the key authors of the State Monopoly Capitalism thesis, Paul Boccara, with a contribution from one of its fiercest critics, Etienne Balibar, besides something of the analysis of class 'fractions' and elites by Nicos Poulantzas. Not least, in an otherwise wide ranging volume, Gramsci, might have figured in his own writ.

Certainly such a symposium, soon, could be of real interest. Boccara, for instance, is forceful in rebutting some of the cruder criticisms of the new State Monopoly Capitalism thesis which, in his work, does not claim that capitalism can be managed indefinitely with continuing social consensus. Similarly, there is a clear case to be made that Gramsci's concept of 'consensus' differs fundamentally from the search for the middle ground of politics and an arithmetic majority alone. Not least, while Gramsci argued that it was crucial for the Left to build up a 'position' of widespread cultural, social and political support for change, ranging wider than the urban proletariat, he also recognised the need for strategies of rapid 'manoeuvre' to exploit crisis within capitalism and achieve its transformation.

As we move deeper into a slump rather than recession of the capitalist system, few on the Left should be ready to neglect such political issues or assume that capitalist crisis will give way to a spontaneous mobilisation of the working class in favour of fundamental change. After interwar fascism, and postwar capitalist growth under restored democracy, there is no sign of a recovery of full employment and increased welfare spending as a buffer against directly repressive policies, on trades union, local or individual rights. To understand this economic crisis we need to look at the slump in capital accumulation which hit key western economies before 1974. We need to challenge not only what Hailsham has called an 'elective dictatorship' but also, in the era of new micro-technologies, the assumption that the welfare ends of social democracy can be realised in future without democratic socialism.

Among this week's contributors:

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NIGEL LEWIS was co-founder of the radio programme *The Arts Worldwide*.

Peter Redgrove

The Moisture-Number

The moisture-number of the species:
Humans are two-thirds clear water;
It is the cloudiness that speaks,
The stagnant turbid water that fights
and talks
Under the flooding clouds, on the
torrential battlefield
By the hurtling river that bleeds.
In the pond of skin, the water-bag,
Between the bones
The peeled fish swarm and couple.
Water leaves us like a soul,
Like a white shadow,
Leaving a little dried crust
Between bones like a cleated footprint:
Travels over the world, water
Enters fresh wombs of brackish water.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

The Arts Worldwide

NIGEL LEWIS reports on paintings as hostages

IN THE FIRST WEEK of December, as President Carter froze all Iranian assets in the United States, a sculpture called 'La Députation' was removed from its site in a reflecting pool on the north side of the National Gallery of Art in Washington. Visitors to the gallery had been able to see the work– an outdoor piece consisting of five larger-than-lifesize figures done in bold primary colours cross-hatched with black lines – since July 1978, when it was lent as part of an exhibition marking the opening of the East Building. It was considered a fine example of modern sculpture, characteristic of the work of Jean Dubuffet. But suddenly, it had become an Iranian asset, and the five figures were hurried away almost as though they had been placed under arrest.

Then the letters began arriving, from the big American banks and others, 'attaching' the sculpture, as similar letters began arriving all over the United States attaching other Iranian property and finances. Much to its embarrassment, the gallery suddenly found itself acting 'in lieu of a bailiff', and powerless to do anything else. Works of art, after all, are supposed to be 'outside politics', and their often considerable monetary value is supposed to be of secondary importance. This convenient half truth was suddenly nakedly exposed, and the embarrassment was aggravated when the director of the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Masud Shafie Monfared, suggested that the gallery had acted unethically and hung on to the sculpture. European state-run museums and some private American galleries had been able to return Iranian-owned art on schedule: why not the American National Gallery, which under the terms of the loan contract should have returned the Dubuffet in summer last year?

The Dubuffet is just one of several works belonging to the Tehran Museum to have got caught in the cross-fire following the taking of the American hostages. Others are Willem De Kooning's 'Women III' (oil on canvas; 1952/'53) which the National Gallery borrowed for the same East Building exhibition; another Willem De Kooning, 'Light In August' (oil and enamel on paper, mounted on canvas; 1946), which was on loan to the Herbert F. Johnson Museum in Ithaca, New York; and Mark Rothko's 'Number 2', which was borrowed by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York for last year's touring Rothko exhibition. The total value of these four works alone is about two million dollars.

In effect, all have been taken hostage, not by the galleries, but by the government, as the galleries themselves are quick to make clear. According to an official at the National Gallery, near the expiry of the loan of the Dubuffet and 'Women III' the Tehran Museum asked if an extension was wanted. It was, but by the time the extension ran out, the crisis in Iran had become so bad that insurance and shipping companies no longer wanted to know. Having told me this, the official suddenly remembered that the gallery's legal office had imposed a press blackout, and said she couldn't elaborate further.

There was a similar blackout at the Guggenheim, but the spokesman there was a little more forthcoming. 'Art is a-political', he said,

> We want to return the Rothko. In fact, it was all crated to go back when the President froze the assets. We're awaiting word from the Treasury Department, just sitting here waiting to do something. It's a hideous no-win situation. Very unfortunate. We wish it did not exist. One consequence might be that other unstable countries might not want to lend to the USA in the future. But what can we do? In the art world, we're high up there, but when it comes to geopolitics we're a very small element.

EQUALLY FAMILIAR with the feeling of being 'a very small element' in the balance of geopolitics is the Yugoslav artist Mica Popovic. He recently gave a big exhibition of his paintings at the Cvijeta Zuzovic gallery in Belgrade, and was strongly criticised, by some who felt that the work on show was less than his best, by others – like the party newspaper *Politika* – who felt that Popovic was 'dishing up yet again the old tale of his sufferings and of the obstacles laid in his path by Yugoslav society'.

Popovic complains that he is being misunderstood, as he was six years ago when a portrait by him of President Tito together with the Dutch royal family was construed as being a satire on Tito. He says that he is a painter, not a politician, and that if he paints morose-looking Yugoslav guest workers in West Germany and uses newspaper-headlines like 'A Nation Asleep' in his work, it is because he wants to be as realistic as possible; he has no ulterior motives. But he does acknowledge that he is attempting 'a moral, social, and cultural critique' and that Serbian republican feeling (he is Serb) plays an important part in his work, most notably in the series of paintings featuring the peasant Gvozden (Serbian for 'made of iron').

President Tito's illness, however, brought a change of emphasis. Imagining Yugoslavia without Tito, Popovic thinks he may lay less stress on Serbia in the future, when the roots that Yugoslavs have in common will matter more than their differences. 'There are right moments for republican feeling', he says, 'but now is not one of those moments.' So there will probably be fewer Gvozden paintings. By an extraordinary co-incidence – given that strategists are wondering whether Yugoslavia will prove to be another Afghanistan – one of the Gvozden series on show in Belgrade incorporated an old *Politika* headline: 'Tito Welcomes President of Afghanistan'. Popovic points out that he painted that picture ten years ago, and that the co-incidence is just another opening for misunderstanding.

Heinrich Heine by Arno Breker

AN ARTIST who's caught in a much bigger time-trap is the West German Arno Breker, Hitler's favourite sculptor, who at the age of 79 still sculpts every day in his Düsseldorf studio. Breker was the man who did most in Hitler's Germany to embody in stone the Aryan ideal of beauty. His monumental sculptures were everywhere – Brünnhilde-like women with flowing locks and clean-limbed young men – particularly in Berlin, where his neo-Grecian athletes in stone and bronze graced the stadium specially built for the 1936 Olympics. Although Breker made Aryanism manifest, he seems to have embraced the aesthetic more fervently than the anti-Semitism. In 1931 he made a model for a sculpture of Heinrich Heine, in which Heine was shown as a young man, sitting on a stone. But two years later the Nazis gained power, Jewish poets were non-persons, and the sculpture was never made.

Heine was born in Düsseldorf, which has a Heine Street, Heine Square, and a Heine memorial by Aristide Maillol in the Hofgarten. But last year the city's Culture Department decided it wanted another statue, and, hearing of the plan, Breker remembered his never-sculpted model, dug it out of storage, and offered it. He said that in 50 years his idea of Heine had not changed. He saw him as 'a symbol of youth, rebellious, resourceful, active, steadfast, sincere, and full of hope', and he ended his submission with the words 'I am for the community'.

But the community wasn't for him. It wasn't long before the Culture Department returned his model, saying that a memorial to Germany's great Jewish poet by Hitler's favourite sculptor would amount to the most extreme bad taste. Instead, a sculptor called Gerresheim was commissioned to do the work.

The manner of his rejection must have come as a severe shock to Breker. Not only did it raise the spectre of his pre-war past, it brought into question his longstanding relationship with Düsseldorf (he was born nearby, educated at the Düsseldorf Academy in Paris, and has lived in the city since the war). First to leap to his defence was a painter who is as Jewish as Heine ever was – the Viennese Ernst Fuchs, who is an old friend of Breker. 'Obviously', Herr Fuchs (somewhat perplexingly) told *Die Welt*, 'the chamber of arts of

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the Reich has not ceased to exist in Düsseldorf'. He condemned the Culture Department's attitude as 'narrow-minded'. 'Artistic inspirations and political ideologies', he added, 'are fundamentally different matters, especially when the ideology is of the past.'

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Scribes

Liberty Hall by MICHAEL FRAYN *Greenwich*
Born in the Gardens by PETER NICHOLS *Globe*
Bastard Angel by BARRIE KEEFFE *Warehouse*
Richard III by SHAKESPEARE *Roundhouse*

An already-celebrated line in *Born in the Gardens* claims that there's a moment in every new British play at which the characters form a more-or-less straight line and start talking about the state of the nation. This is certainly true of *Gardens* itself, and also true of *Bastard Angel,* but only subliminally true of *Liberty Hall.* There, the state of Britain is a subject always present but always conscientiously avoided by the characters, because it is in Britain, not Russia, that bloody revolution occurred in 1917. Nasty things happen to the loose-tongued, the pessimistic, the socially errant. 'No one is taken outside and shot,' a government guide reassures her guest, a flamboyant representative of the capitalist Czarist press: 'you mean they don't even take them *outside* any more?' is his fake-naïve riposte.

How would our scribes and scribblers have conducted themselves under Stalinism? That's the question Michael Frayn conjures out of his thinking cap, jinks and wittily juggles with, but does not altogether answer. The time is 1937, the place a Balmoral lately converted into a sort of workhouse for writers and currently occupied by Enid Blyton, Warwick Deeping, Godfrey Winn and, perhaps, Hugh Walpole. 'Perhaps', because the last of these hasn't come down for his breakfast kedgeree, and is promptly assumed to have been arrested during the night, presumably for lack of enthusiasm. The reaction of the others is to shrug resignedly, as at a misfortune that might overtake anyone, and then try to nab his bedroom, the only one with warm piping in it. Blyton, in particular, feels the cold, both physically and politically. The lack of heating, along with the rejection of her recent erotic poetry and the official discouragement of her 'morbid and introspective' children's stories, is why she feverishly buttonholes the visiting Russian and begs him for marriage.

The naming of names gives the covert accusations of apathy and avarice a certain scandalous frisson, yet doesn't take us as far as it might. What I, for one, wanted to know was what these pliant wordsmiths were actually writing, where and how they lived when not toiling at Balmoral, how they squared aspiration with achievement, conscience with compulsion. What Mr Frayn does instead is use their unspoken fear of an offstage firing-squad to generate some traditional tensions and, out of them, belly-laughter. Walpole returns, revealing that he's been queuing for underwear since dawn in the village, and is outraged to find his room snitched by the mealy-mouthed Winn. In fact, he angrily expires of a heart attack, panicking everyone else into hiding his corpse in a springy-hinged trunk and substituting a dour but sly Scots factotum and look-alike as the Russian journalist's interviewee. This isn't as plausible as strict interpretation of the laws of farce would require; but Rikki Fulton, podgily distraught as Walpole, and alternately befogged and garrulous as 'Walpole', makes it all irresistibly funny.

The only trouble is, what's to happen next? Those who (rightly) want to discover for themselves should shut their eyes for a couple of sentences. Those who don't, or don't mind knowing anyway, may as well be told that the Russian is so stunned by Walpole's apparent informality and empathy for the underdog that he renounces his cynicism and declares himself a convert to British communism. This is potentially a neat way of sniping at our own more gullible fellow-travellers: G.B. Shaw, for instance, who saw what he was meant to see in the Russia of the 1930s. But in practice it becomes just another extravagant twist in a plot that becomes increasingly bizarre, and ends up as a sort of Pirandellian orgy, all booze, glee and anarchically shifting identities: a celebration, one supposes, of the unreconstructed individual in all his pristine muddle.

All qualifications aside, this is a sophisticated drollery, an educated amusement, well directed by Alan Dosser, whose cast also (and happily) includes Julian Fellowes, Oliver Cotton, and George Cole as a dismally cowed bureaucrat. The new director of *Gardens*, which I somewhat hesitantly admired in Bristol, is Clifford Williams, a man of proven ability; but he has not, I fear, altogether solved the main problem left him by Peter Nichols, which is how to reconcile state-of-Britain punditry and family politics.

Beryl Reid, burbling and gurgling in her best crackpot style from beneath an 'Afrodisiac' hairdo, and Barry Foster, playing her shambling, slovenly son, are absentmindedly ensconced in Tudor Manor, a Victorian folly distinguished mainly for its exploding geyser and bust gadgetry. Enter Foster's two siblings, a well-meaning but (of course) ineffective Labour MP played by Peter Bowles, and a contemptuous double-divorcée from wigged-out California, played by Jan Waters. The new arrivals' aim is to rescue, their victims to avoid being rescued. Reid and Foster want only to continue the same blithe descent into terminal eccentricity upon which (Nichols suggests with a mixture of nostalgia, affection and exasperation) many of us British-born lemmings are presently engaged. One trouble with the play is a lack of development and momentum, though there's an abundance of wry, funny lines to distract us from it. Another, as I've implied, is its general impression of being not one thing nor the other. As social analysis, it's sketchy and impressionistic, not to say jaded and biassed; as a record of relationships, it has its moments of truth, but

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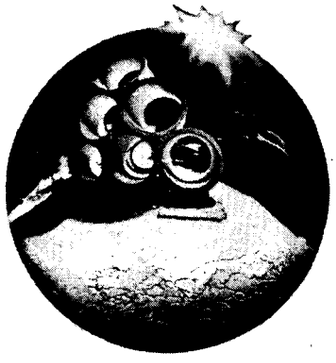

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not so many and penetrating that we feel we're engaging with real people engaging with real life. Still, the same accusation could be made against Shaw's *Heartbreak House,* a comparison that is, I suppose, a sort of praise in itself.

The principal comparison earned by *Bastard Angel* is with *Teeth 'n' Smiles*, best of a still-burgeoning genre that uses rock as a metaphor for working-class energy exploited, national hopes decayed, 1960s dwindled into 1980s and so on. Barrie Keeffe's prime contribution to this drama is a character scarcely less arresting than the disintegrating junkie played by Helen Mirren in David Hare's prototype: a brash crustacean named Shelley, capable of brutally humiliating a servant who once patronised her, of sleeping without after-show of remorse with a boy who turns out to be her own son, but not quite of watching imperviously while a zonked ex-lover stumbles towards his inevitable suicide. The play has been accused of being too long, and no doubt it should be cut, on the principle that less trees mean a more clearly-defined wood; yet much of the overwriting, never mind the writing, is sensitive and sharp; and Charlotte Cornwell, pale and brooding, simultaneously abrupt, offhand and alarmingly intense, keeps us wanting to know how much of Shelley is shell, and how and why she acquired it.

Lines cut, added, misplaced, ironically slanted; characters missing, changed, even invented. We might piously disapprove of its manhandling of Shakespeare if the Rustaveli Company hied from Godalming instead of Georgia. But Robert Sturua's production, exploiting a style of costume that might be fancifully dubbed Ruritanian coachman, is remarkable inventive; the acting is bolder, ampler, broader-gestured than our own traditions easily permit; and in Ramaz Chkhikvadze we've as extraordinary a Richard as I've seen, all roly-poly eyes and oily, dangerous smirks, a cupid in depraved old age or the picture of Dorian Gray nearing its end. He develops, too, becoming hoarser, blearier, more desperate once, looking like a black, bottled spider, he has actually ascended the rickety tree-house that momentarily doubles as his throne.

The result is grander than *Ubu Roi,* but funnier, more mocking than *Richard* itself usually is: a sardonic attack on all politicians, down to the future Henry VII, who is tendentiously seen as Crookback's treacherous chum. Perhaps it, too, tells us something about the state of Britain. Perhaps it tells us more about the state of Russia.

Television

Julian Barnes

Grateful Guests

Were you a Javanese in Jogjakarta who fancied dropping by the royal palace for a dancing lesson (and you would be quite entitled to, since pupils range from 'the wives of cabinet ministers to the wives of shopkeepers'), local decree would oblige you to approach the building in what David Attenborough, on *Spirit of Asia* (BBC-2), described as 'the traditional crouching posture'. This is a cross between one of those auto-castrating Russian dances and something CCF cadets are forced to learn, called, if I remember rightly, the monkey run. You propel yourself along by resting one hand on the ground and sharply swinging the legs outwards and forwards on the side of the free arm. As a result the approaches to the Jogjakarta palace appear to be swarming with exceptionally lively cripples, as in a clip from some lost Eisenstein epic. It may well be, in fact, that the recommended gait affords an excellent means of limbering up for the lesson ahead; but it seems more probable that the instilling of deference is the principal royal motive.

David Attenborough himself approaches the Spirit of Asia using the same traditional crouching posture. This may be a productive style for creeping up on things we think we know too well and over-despise, like animals; indeed, part of the deserved success of *Life on Earth* derived directly from Attenborough's guileless mixture of reverence and zeal. But the last episode of *Life* – which presented humans as if they were merely an advanced breed of problem-solving beast – was the least satisfactory, and in retrospect it's easier to see why. People – unless they're fossilised or preserved in peat, and enlivened with some label like protocrotojurassic – aren't really Attenborough's thing; and in the face of extant specimens of *homo sapiens* his reverence turns easily to deference. Maybe he is simply too nice, feels too obligated by hospitality received. In Bali, for instance, he passed on to us some interesting facts – that the colour of mourning is white; that the Balinese believe their island to be the centre of the world; that every morning the locals bless their cows with holy water and give their plants little offerings of rice-cakes. But after a whole hour of lissom girl dancers from this Humbert heaven, of smiling stonemasons carving away at smiling effigies of Whatname, you couldn't help savagely wondering whether there weren't any used car salesmen around, or insurance agents, or whether, say, the islanders played Rugby League.

Attenborough's style in this series comes across as remarkably old-fashioned, reminiscent of those early TV travelogues where a basking iguana, a dugout canoe, and a slow pan across a row of topless pygmy women would keep an audience in thrall for week after week. Of course, *Spirit of Asia* is only concerned with the religions of the East, and it wouldn't be fitting (though it might be funny) if Attenborough suddenly started coming on like Jonathan Dimbleby; but even so, religion anywhere connects with and deforms daily life, a commodity of which the series is paralysingly short. Ronald Eyre's *The Long Search* was more personal, more particular, and considerably more illuminating. Attenborough tends to tell us that the Jogjakarta sultan 'fills his palace with visual beauty and musical delight', and that his 17 gamelans have up to 30 players each in them; then we settle back and watch the incredible phalangic control of some temple dancers. But what about those people in Western clothes who ride bicycles through the occasional cutaway shots? Does everyone earn a living from batik dyeing? For what percentage and grouping of the population does Java's mongrel religion have significance? Attenborough's absorbed deference to colourful local rituals often ends up sounding like unintentional arrogance: the people are defined and limited by their pageantry, and we idly patronise them for behaving in a way which, perhaps, they adopt most enthusiastically only when the television cameras are around.

The traditional crouching posture is also currently being displayed elsewhere on BBC-2, in *Public School.* The Head Master of Westminster, writing in the *Listener* last September, referred contentedly to the way in which 'the independent schools' (as they now style themselves, to make their position sound less privileged, more Thatcherishly earned) 'have become less defensive and more sophisticated in their relations with the media'. The Headmasters' Conference will doubtless be well pleased with the two months of free publicity for Radley College and similar establishments which the Corporation has generously awarded them. Even the programme's more rugged passages – kayaking through the rapids with a whooping school orchestra on the soundtrack – made public school life resemble one of those seductive advertisements to Join the Professionals. The chaplain told his young charges that he liked to think of them as 'saints in the making': the Warden told them how in five years there they were going 'to acquire the right habits for life'; and the jovial bark-worse-than-his-bite maths master confessed that, when he was a child, he used to line up his teddy bears and award them marks. Who wouldn't rush to start saving the £2,500 a year needed to entrust his son to such an outfit? Who would bother to try and work out instead a reverse sum: what it might cost Radley to buy a half-hour advertising slot at peak viewing time every week for two months.

Newsnight, BBC-2's about-time-too current affairs programme, duly failed to appear on its opening night. The only comfort in the cancellation is that it prevented the show starting on what had proved to be an excellent evening for the opposition. *World in Action* (Granada) came up – perhaps by design – with a tough investigation of the business activities of Louis Edwards, chairman and virtual owner of Manchester United FC. Their allegations made up an everyday tale of commercial success: 'sweeteners' and 'danglers' in the Edwards meat business; cash inducements to schoolboy footballers (£2,500 left with Peter Lorimer's family by the United chief scout); false entries in share transfer records; and cash inducements (subsequently undeclared) to sellers of shares the Edwards family wanted to buy. It was a drab and convincing catalogue of those twilight offences – against Football League rules, against the Companies Act – which most people don't know about, or, if they do, don't care enough about. The only disturbing aspect of a painstaking *Granada* investigation was the transmission of a tape

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recording of a phone conversation between Edwards and the son of one of his share-transfer 'victims'. Edwards had refused to speak to the *WIA* team, so instead they set him up with a deceitful conversation to make him admit (as he did) some of the facts in their case. From what was presented of Edwards's activities, he's not exactly a stickler for all the niceties of the law; even so, it's an unusual – and not necessarily healthy – situation when a man has a right to silence at law but no right to silence on television.

With *Pride and Prejudice* supplying the Sunday-night comedy at the moment, it's unlikely that *Pig in the Middle* (LWT) can hope in its first few weeks to come across as more than just an upmarket version of Leslie Thomas's appalling *Tropic*. Dinsdale Landen plays the Pig; Joanna van Gyseghem the wife who controls his diet, permits venery Only on Saturday, and thus drives him into the kitchen of another woman. One moment of the starving, randy Landen carried the first episode: as his wrinkle-defying wife lies in bed pampering her eyelids with cucumber slices, he shifts, slavers, swoops and scoffs them. One query: the theme music, evidently and appropriately a parody of Francis 'Un Homme et Une Femme' Lai, turned out to have been written by Lai himself. Did they ask for a self-parody, or did they just keep mum and giggle? *Pig* cut a regretted swathe out of Festival Theatre's *The Misanthrope* (BBC-1), which was excellent at both ends.

Ian Holm and Nigel Hawthorne acted opposite one another as finely as they did recently on stage in *Uncle Vanya*. Maybe a de-Nelliganised David Hare or a de-Bennettised John Osborne could write a new play for the pair of them.

Art

John Spurling

White Knight

L. Moholy-Nagy *ICA*
Joel Shapiro *Whitechapel*
Mario Merz *Whitechapel*

One's impression of László Moholy-Nagy is of a kind of artistic spear-carrier; a figure on the fringe of several avant-garde movements in the period after the first world war; a vague person swelling the ranks of one of those group photographs notable for its Kandinsky and Klee or its Tzara and Lissitzky. The Arts Council's travelling show – now at the ICA but moving next month to Leicester and from there to Edinburgh and Newcastle – brings the man and his work into closer focus but only partly corrects the impression. Far from being a camp-follower he was so thoroughly a man of the future, at a time when to be so was the common denominator of otherwise disparate artistic factions, that he vanishes, as it were, into the white light behind the spectrum.

The exhibition is laid out in sections corresponding to the well-defined phases of Moholy-Nagy's career. He fought and was wounded in Italy and began to draw with a fine nervous energy during his convalescence; associating with avant-garde artists in his native Hungary he evolved a geometrical style for his paintings and, after the collapse of Hungary's Communist Revolution (which he saw himself as serving artistically rather than politically), moved to Berlin, where he fell in with Dadaists and Constructivists, post-Revolutionary Russians and pre-Revolutionary Germans. At this time he was still essentially a painter of geometrical abstracts – cool, well-organised, delicately-coloured variations on the strut and the circle, whose main personal element is their sense of transparency. Ideologically Moholy-Nagy was opposed to individualism, a convinced collectivist, and the image one receives of him throughout this exhibition is very much that of the photograph at its entrance: a boffin in a boiler-suit, half scientist, half worker. It seems appropriate that when he came to London in 1935 he should have lived briefly in one of those impersonal 'minimum' flats designed by Wells Coates and reproduced recently in *Thirties* at the Hayward.

His two-year stay in London was chiefly occupied with commercial work, including a documentary film called 'Lobsters', an exhibition for Imperial Airways, posters for London Transport, special effects for a futuristic film by Korda and design consultancy for the

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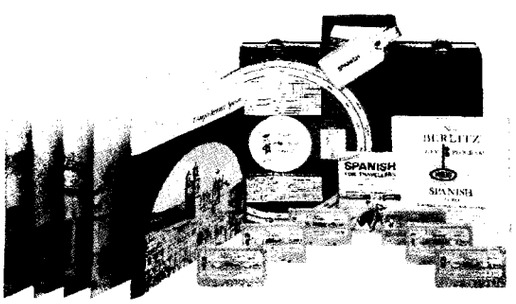

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newly-opened Simpson's of Piccadilly. He also, rather improbably, contributed photographs to three books of English nostalgia, one on streetmarkets, one on Eton and one, by Betjeman, on Oxford. No wonder that when the call came from Gropius, by then setting up the New Bauhaus in Chicago, Moholy-Nagy should have precipitately shaken our dust from his feet.

He had been Gropius's 'Prime Minister' at the Bauhaus from 1923-28, co-editing the Bauhaus books and writing two of them himself. There too he made photographs, photograms and photomontages (prophesying that photography would bury painting), but above all taught, as he did again in America until his death of leukaemia in 1946. 'His teaching methods,' writes Joanna Drew in her foreword to the catalogue, 'are still fundamental to all art schools now', but cannot of course be exhibited. It all adds up to a visually etiolated show, strangely at odds with the busy, serious, idealistic life it celebrates. The two most memorable objects are both in their way side-issues, yet both also typical of his 'whole' approach, his belief that 20th-century art and design should be indivisible: the Parker 51 pen, which he designed in 1941, and the 'Lightprop', a glittering little machine for entertaining an audience during the interval of a play with abstract patterns of light and shadow. Moholy-Nagy was more than a spear-carrier, he was one of the knights of a brave new technological world. The insubstantiality of what he left behind is a measure not of what he failed to do but of what he aimed to do. Fortunately the century has turned out neither as pure nor as simple as he hoped.

The Whitechapel is good at showing us foreigners. One may not often warm to them, but at least one can keep an eye on them. The American sculptor upstairs – Joel Shapiro – is an artist with a good wheeze. Instead of making huge boring pieces ('minimalism') he makes tiny boring pieces: a miniature bridge-structure, a toy house-shape, for example, as well as various abstract forms. The pieces are placed on the floor or attached to the wall at intervals suitable for large-scale pieces, so as to make you feel like Gulliver or a person with delirium. They have a certain momentary charm and are presumably much easier to sell than large boring pieces.

The Italian sculptor downstairs – Mario Merz – is in a different league altogether. His pieces are mostly too large to sell to museums and have to be constructed afresh for each show, but they are less concerned with the mere manipulation of space (the *idée fixe* of most contemporary sculpture) than with the incorporation of surprising, ready-made materials into objects of which space and proportion are integral parts. *The Double Igloo* is a dome of wire mesh coated all over with irregular slabs of white clay and set inside a much larger dome, whose iron framework supports irregular sheets of broken glass. The two domes are physically connected only by a thin shaft of blue neon; a second neon shaft transfixes a panama hat perched high up on the outer dome. The effect is both improvised and elegant, unexpected and inevitable, as if Palladio were to design a building out of materials supplied by Heath Robinson or Bach were to compose a suite of street sounds. Moholy-Nagy could never in a hundred years have imagined such a thing and that is the real failure of his vision of the brave new world.

Music Hall

Charles Fox

Those Were the Days

Little Tich by MARY TICH & RICHARD FINDLATER *Elm Tree Books* £6.95
British Music Hall On Record by BRIAN RUST *General Gramophone Publications* £11
You Have Made A Good Old Mess Of It GUS ELEN *Topic* 12T36
You Can't Help Liking Him MAX MILLER *Pye Golden Hour* GH675

Just as families no longer visit Bedlam to enjoy a good laugh at the lunatics, so, in very recent decades, freakishness has lost much of its allure. True, Quilp's dwarfish malevolence helps to hoist the viewing figures of *The Old Curiosity Shop*. But holidaymakers no longer fork out cash – as they did in the 1930s – to eavesdrop on midgets just being themselves. Tattooed men and fat ladies suffer from the slump too. Even Peg Leg Bates, the wizardly one-legged tap dancer who came to London with Louis Armstrong in 1956, never really caught on here. And no longer could an entertainer launch his career simply by being 4ft 6in high, having five fingers and a thumb on each hand, and wearing boots half as long as he was tall.

Such, however, were the natural and manufactured assets of Harry Relph, destined to provide a nickname for generations of diminutives yet dubbed 'Little Tichborne' because of his plumpness (anyone even slightly paunchy in the 1870s got compared to the elephantine Tichborne Claimant, Arthur Orton). He began fending for himself at ten, playing pantomime songs on a penny whistle, doing naïve little dances. Two years later he turned pro. Then came the grind around shabby provincial halls, as well as the 'spittoons', the profession's derisory name for bookings in saloons where the stage might consist of just three planks and the entertainer be expected to do his act at least 30 times a night.

Our modern zest for nostalgia has created an image of the Victorian and Edwardian music hall a trifle askew with the facts. Brand-new halls in the West End – the London Pavilion, the Alhambra, the Tivoli – were certainly glamorous, but tattier establishments abounded among the 347 halls of one kind or another which were spread across London when Little Tich tried his luck there in the 1880s. Performers often worked four halls an evening, hurrying from one to another by hansom cab – or even by bus.

It is fair enough to regard the British music hall as the cultural expression of a working class which had moved into the big towns, to live cramped but very communal lives. Yet it would be foolish to overlook the toing-and-froing that went on, the way American songs – 'Ta-Ra-Ra-Boom-De-Ay', for instance – turned into British hits, as well as the success of British performers overseas. Little Tich had to make it in New York before London really accepted him. During the 1890s he appeared in Berlin, St Petersburg, Vienna, Barcelona and dozens of other major European cities. For a time he actually lived in Paris.

Mary Tich, co-author of this biography, is the star's daughter by his third wife. In 1964 she discovered trunks full of cuttings, photographs and play-bills up in the loft. These provide the basis for a book which covers the public career very fully but also touches on some mysteries in Tich's domestic life (at one time both he and his second wife, unknown to one another, were running second homes). Yet the most immediate mystery for the present day reader is exactly what it was that made so many discerning people consider Tich one of the greatest music hall artists (Nijinsky, according to Sacheverell Sitwell, went to see him perform whenever the Diaghilev Ballet was in London). The singing and patter on his handful of records remain resolutely unfunny. A minute or two of his act preserved on flickering film tell us more. What mattered, it seems, were the actions, the gestures.

Not so much the Big Boots Dance (it ended with Tich on his points, standing seven feet tall), which audiences went on demanding despite Tich's reluctance to perform it. Perhaps the painter Paul Nash came closest to describing the kind of thing that happened. One routine, it appears, involved a house at a corner of the stage, with a grating into which Tich started peering. 'At once the gay, innocent comic becomes a mischievous little monster, all leers and terrible chuckles', recalled Nash. 'His little stick held casually behind his back somehow begins to look like a little dog's tail which begins to wag with pleasure.'

What Little Tich seems to have created was a series of character sketches. And so, but in song rather than mime, did Gus Elen. Albert Chevalier may have been the most famous coster comedian of the 1890s but he tended to be overly sentimental. Gus Elen was cooler, shrewder, and the songwriters he patronised came up with numbers that projected a more authentic picture of the East End. Elen, just like Chevalier, was acting a part, adopting a persona, but he was familiar with the streets and the people, aware of what the cheerful squalor signified. Perhaps his vignettes sidestep the grosser aspects but they always deal with real characters living in recognisable situations.

There is the town-dweller's vision of the rural scene, half-whimsical, half-ironic: 'It really is a werry pretty garden', Elen commences, going on to point out how 'with a ladder and some glasses/You could see to' Ackney Marshes/If it wasn't for the 'ouses in between'. There is the working man who comes into money and puts on airs, wearing kid gloves, putting 'a Piccadilly winder in the eye', calling his female parent ma instead of muvver.

At least a couple of the songs on this LP eulogise beer (it was all real ale in those days), but 'The Publican' takes a hard look from the other side of the bar. Work is viewed sceptically, its absence endured stoically ('If you

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can't work then you can't get the sack/That's an argyment that's sensible and sound/So lay your head back on the piller/And read yer *Daily Mirror*/And wait till the work comes round').

Gus Elen and Little Tich seem never to have gone in for smut. But plenty of other music hall performers – Marie Lloyd for one – deployed double-entendres with an extravagance that has, alas, been devalued by the onset of permissiveness.

Max Miller, in fact, built a reputation in the 1930s upon lewd anticipation, getting his listeners to supply the missing ingredients ('What's the difference between a girl getting in or out of a car and a rude joke? Sometimes you see it, sometimes you don't!'). This LP was recorded in the early 1960s, yet the audience still knew the ropes. Miller only had to utter the word 'Rissoles' for widespread cackling to break out.

If Gus Elen projected a wistful realism, Max Miller had the brashness of a seaside postcard, celebrating a world where all women over 40 have big bums and men drop into chemists' shops to buy only one thing. It is decidedly a pre-Pill society ('Four Wrens were in the road crying, so I took them in for a cup of tea. "Which one's going to be mother?" I said. And they all started crying again.')

Morality turns out to be negotiable ('I went home and caught the wife in the arms of the milkman. "This can't be right", I said, "It's the coalman we owe money to".') But in the end the jokes are subservient to the style, just as Frankie Howerd's 'ooohs' and 'aaaahs' often convey more than words do.

Max Miller, Gus Elen and Little Tich all have their records listed – well, not this particular Max Miller LP – in *British Music Hall On Record*, the first attempt at cataloguing a vast quantity of discs and cylinders, often on obscure or fly-by-night labels. Browsing through the book one glimpses horrors as well as delights.

What could possibly depress the spirits more than having to listen to all 314 of Charles Penrose's numbers from 'I Tried To Keep Laughing' (1911) to 'Let's Have A Jolly Good Laugh' (1949) and taking in such rib-ticklers as 'Laughing, Stuttering Sam' and 'Laughter, Love And Lingerie'?

The first edition of a discography can never be complete. But a few of the omissions seem inexplicable. It is nice, after all, to have details of all ten titles recorded by our own Arthur Marshall (concluding – on 14 September 1938 – with 'Miss Pritchard's Tricycle'), but where are George Robey and Harry Tate, not to mention Issy Bonn? Meanwhile, enthusiasts are recommended to get hold of *Music Hall*, an unpretentiously produced magazine but packed with expertise (it's obtainable from Tony Barker, 50 Reporton Road, London SW6).

The latest issue of this magazine has an article on Arthur Lennard, once billed as 'The Peckham Favourite'. Earnest scholars, however, will be saddened to discover that neither book nor magazine have so far got round to listing Arthur Elwood's Edison Bell recording of Fred Earle's picaresque song – about yet another would-be swell, yet another nobby cane – 'With My Little Wigger-Wagger In My Hand'.

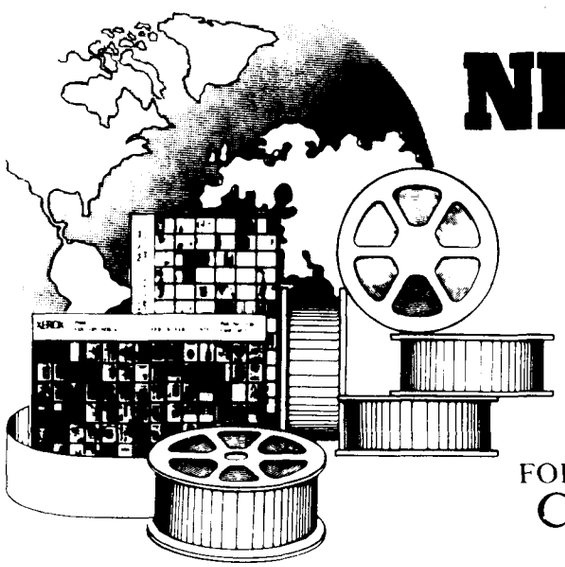
Films

John Coleman

Leaky

The Human Factor (AA) *Classic, Haymarket; Odeons, Kensington, Westbourne Grove, Swiss Cottage and Chelsea*
A Different Story (AA) *Classic Poly, Regent Street*
Sunburn (A) *Classics, Haymarket and Victoria; Odeon, Westbourne Grove*
From the Cloud to the Resistance *ICA*

Graham Greene, it may fairly be said, has left his mark on the cinema. There was that acid, accurate stint as film reviewer for the *Spectator* and for the short-lived *Night and Day* during the years 1935 to 1940 (most of these notices repay another look: they were collected eight years ago under the title, *The Pleasure-Dome*). And there are the movies, at least 17 of them by now, drawn from his novels and stories – though probably the most famous Greene film, *The Third Man*, first saw light as a script directly written for the screen. The conventional wisdom used to have it that his beady eye for the telling detail, his quick cutting between episodes, his deployment of urban geography, singularly lent themselves to film translation; and there's not much doubt that this still holds good. Why, then,



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should Otto Preminger's *The Human Factor*, with a screenplay by the witty and ingenious Tom Stoppard, come before us suffering from pernicious anaemia? Large stretches are downright listless. The quick, unpopular answer is surely that the 1978 spy-plus-love story was never anywhere near as 'brilliant' or 'beautiful and disturbing' (2,000,000 copies sold) as the reviewers' consensus had it; I can think immediately of at least a dozen novels of his that outrank it for entertainment and insights. It may also be that we seem to have supped rather full of late on the hazy old horrors and blunders of our Secret Service.

Briefly, the tale concerns itself with a leak suspected as originating from Section 6A of London's security HQ, a department staffed by two men, Davis, young, restless, in love with a cool secretary and mildly addicted to port, and Maurice Castle, his superior in age and experience, one-time field-man happily married to black Sarah, an agent he contrived to whisk out of South Africa one step ahead of BOSS. She has a black son, not Castle's, and they live tranquilly in Berkhamsted (Greeneland, indeed) with a useless watchdog. A Colonel Daintry, a solitary with a broken marriage behind him and a daughter about to wed, is imported to track down the leak. There is a sinister Doctor Percival in cahoots with Sir John Hargreaves, 'C', the spy chief, and suddenly Castle's old enemy, Cornelius Muller from BOSS, is in town, to share information over an appalling new cooperative defensive plan known as Uncle Remus. An even nastier death occurs, ascribed to a wrecked liver; there are visits to a bookshop in Soho for *two* copies of *War and Peace*; someone ends up in Moscow, bereft.

Stoppard's script is unusually faithful to the original, the main stretching coming in some extended flashbacks to the progress of Castle's dangerous affair with Sarah in apartheid country. The few excellent jokes are there: Daintry (Richard Attenborough) turns up at a shooting weekend at 'C's place with a tenner's worth of Maltesers for his baffled hostess, later suffers a ghastly moment during his daughter's wedding reception at his wife's flat, quite planted out wth porcelain owls. Derek Jacobi is sympathetic as lovelorn Davis, Robert Morley suitably unpleasant as the unctuously cold-blooded doctor who liaises with 'C' (smooth Richard Vernon) and the bacteriological warfare people out at Porton. Iman's Sarah looks ravishing, but moves – one takes her to have been a model – miles more persuasively than she acts. And Nicol Williamson's Castle has the drawbridge up throughout; he is everywhere stiff and uneasy in the role, not *as* the role.

Probably the erratic Mr Preminger must bear the blame for some very starchy set-ups (Gielgud goes for *nothing* in an early scene) and for the heavy deliberation with which too much of the dialogue is delivered; one has rarely been so conscious of pauses, as if lines are being desperately dredged up at the last possible minute. As for that Moscow skyline, like crude posters pasted to the enforced defector's windows . . . that must have been when the money ran out.

A Different Story has a limp wristful of bright remarks written by Henry Olek and is different only in that it gives an *Odd Couple* situation a deeply unlikely sexual tweak. Two gays shack up together, one m. and one f. Perry King, all giggles, profile, and boyish charm, has been turfed out by his last rich gentleman friend, so moves in with whacky young Meg Foster, a lesbian real-estate person – of authentic charm, incidentally. He dons an apron and runs her up the odd dress. Then, in a positive welter of improvised merriment after a party, they find themselves performing an unnatural act and *liking* it. She gets pregnant, they marry, he gets a job designing frocks for money, grows a moustache and starts staying out till 3 a.m. And what do you think? It's not his male boss, but a female model that Meg discovers him sharing a late-night shower with. Ms Foster imports a little conviction against the odds. Paul Aaron directed, but not *enough*.

Sunburn, at a moment neither more nor less important than any other moment in its obviously and mercifully truncated length, has Charles Grodin as Jake, an inept investigator sent to Acapulco by an insurance company who suspect they are being taken for $5m. on a car-death claim, massaging the pinky-brown back of Farrah Fawcett (where did the Majors go, then?), the model he has hired as a pretend-wife. Well, that wraps up the title. The *film* is really not very good, either. Joan Collins is around, doing her hard-drinking, take-me bit ('Be cruel to me, darling,' she actually says to Grodin, who is doing his James Cain bit, i.e. stupid, monosyllabic, terribly relaxed). The dead millionaire's family are mysterious and dull; the Mafia have a foot in somewhere; Art Carney is wasted as Grodin's veteran assistant-on-the-spot.

From the Cloud to the Resistance (1979) has a week's run at the ICA, opening a complete retrospective of the joint work of Jean-Marie Straub and Daniele Huillet. A series of six dialogues, extracted like teeth from two books by Cesare Pavese, is stonily recited by pairs of posed people; there is also an extract about an experience of being a partisan in Piedmont. Impenetrable.

Weekend Competition

No 2602 **Set by Catherine Rushton**
Consorts or close companions of famous figures of the past spill the beans to the popular press. Up to 150 words from 'The Truth About My Life With Julius' or 'The Secrets of Samson: My Suffering' or some such. By 15 February.

No 2599 **Set by Paddy Beesley**
We asked for extracts from scholarly works by living British comedians.

Report **By Len the Unlucky**
It wasn't supposed to be my turn again for *weeks*. But Fat Jeff claimed that he never watched television and wouldn't know a Les Dawson from a Larry Grayson if he saw one, while Farouche Features went round saying 'Who is Bernard Manning anyway?' And they all know I've got a colour set because they will insist on coming round to watch *Match of the Day* on it. So, here I am . . . and I suppose it wasn't *too* bad really. There weren't any absolutely outstanding, jackpot-hitting, ODQ-winning entries, but it was all mildly enjoyable and I'm awarding a wellington and a couple of newtons apiece for the following efforts by Larry Grayson, Bernard Manning, John Cleese, E. L. Wisty, Dave Allen and Frankie Howerd.

The Greek stories are nice really. Take the time Antigone filled her gob . . . goblet to toast Jocasta and her brother who seemed a nice boy. It was Saturnalia – quite a gay day – and they were playing the Generation game. 'Where's Everard?' asks Antigone. 'He and Father were to play a game with us.' Now Father – that's Oedipus – suffers from his feet – I feel for him – and the Oracle had told him that he had unwittingly killed his father and wed his mother. Quite a to-do! He was so upset that he blinded himself. True! What a sad day! In he hobbles. 'Father!' cries Antigone. 'We're waiting for you. The next game's Blind Man's Buff. Come in – and shut that door!'
P. W. R. Foot

Anyroad. Hegel thought Manny was a silly old Kant because he couldn't see that the world united sensuousness and spirit. Like the wife when she's had a few on a Saturday night. Little Manny was too busy playing with his *Ding-an-sich* to get round to the interpenetration of opposites. Very nice ding too, as the Pakis say; heard about the one who joined a literacy campaign because he wanted to keep Britain tidy? But Marx, whose brain was nearly the size of his hooter, reckoned Hegel had got it all upside down, like the Irishman who was so lazy he came out of his Mam feet first to get another few seconds' kip.
Terry Eagleton

As I was saying, before I was so rudely interrupted, Shakespeare's an absolutely super playwright. Have you thought how splendid his heroes are? No. Of course not. Don't go in much for thinking, do you? Let me tell you, *if* it will do any good. There these chaps are, surrounded by poisonous, predatory females but always coming out on top. Lear knows how to cope with ingratitude in daughters. Desdemona soon learns that she'd have been better off buckling to and getting the housework done. Think of Hamlet – gives Ophelia just what *she* deserves; Benedick knows what's what in the matter of taming shrews–let 'em *suffer* a bit and they'll come to heel! Bang on!
Peter Alexander

Did you know that James Joyce was more interested in words than in telling a story? Yes. He'd get up in the morning and say, 'What words shall I use today?' Then he'd write them down. Loads and loads of words. Course, he didn't see very well, so some of the words came out a bit strange. 'Agenbite of inwit', for example. Your average reader wouldn't know what that means. As a matter of fact, I don't know what it means. Still, it sounds all right for an unidiomatic phrase. Yes, most unidiomatic. You see, Joyce didn't have much time for your ordinary idioms. Mind you, he was an extremely original writer. Oh yes. One of the most original writers that ever lived. Personally I think dodgy eyesight had a lot to do with it.
Basil Ransome-Davies

The Irish have a saying that good plays have a beginning, a middle, and an end if there's time to be Shaw. It's always seemed to me that Beckett isn't so difficult. Two Irishmen go to see his play hearin' it's about the problems of Behan. Paddy says, it's about gardenin', will you look at the tree onstage. Mick says, there's only two. Paddy says, no – the *tree*: 'tis only the second act, and it's grown leaves. And Mick says, No, it's all about the Pope. How's that, says Paddy. Well, says Mick, I heard it didn't have a story, but 'twas all right if you had catholic tastes. Good night; and may your Godot go with you.
Bill Greenwell

Unfortunately, you see, he had this *hump*. No – *don't* – it's wicked to mock the afflicted. Mind you, *I*'d get the hump if I had to live in Twickenham. Or 'Twickers' as we rugger buffs know it. Rhymes with – don't you *dare*! Of course, it was nicer in those days. Not so full of your *hoi*, let alone your *polloi*. Anyway, he was a great expert on metre was Alexander. No, *not* the thing you have a go at with the poker when the old man's left you a bit short. METRE – your dactyls and your anapaests – *paests* I said! Your spondees and your trochees. And don't you ever get your trochees in a twist, because it can be *very* nasty – I should say so!
Martin Fagg

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Tony Miles

Chess

No 165 **Karpov defeated**

Having to write a column quickly when there is nothing much at hand to write about is a common journalistic problem. The best solution seems to be to create some news oneself. So it is this week. I had just returned from a skiing holiday, oblivious of events in the rest of the world (I heard a rumour that one or two English players did well in the Sussex Open but I had no details). Consequently, aided by having Black against the world champion in the first round of the European team championships, I set about making some news.

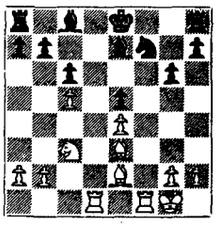
White: A. Karpov **Black: A. J. Miles**

1.P-K4. Karpov is always at home in well-known theoretical lines so it is best to avoid them. A couple of years ago I had a ridiculous (?) idea of an all-purpose defence to anything but as yet had not found a suitable opponent to test it on. Now, I decided, was as good a time as any. **1. . .P-QR3!? 2.P-Q4, P-QN4.** By this time the spectators' laughter was becoming embarrassing. **3.N-KB3, B-N2.** It's only 1. . .P-QN3 with a bit more space really!? **4.B-Q3, N-KB3; 5.Q-K2, P-K3; 6.P-QR4, P-B4!? 7.QPxP.** If 7.P-K5, P-B5 is unclear. **7. . .KBxP; 8.QN-Q2, P-N5; 9.P-K5, N-Q4; 10.N-K4, B-K2; 11.0-0.** I expected B-KN5. **11. . .N-QB3; 12.B-Q2.** Now if B-KN5, P-B3 and a quick 0-0-0. **12. . .Q-B2; 13.P-B4, PxPep; 14.NxP, NxN; 15.BxN, N-N5; 16.BxN, BxB; 17.QR-B1, Q-N3; 18.B-K4, 0-0.** Black has a perfectly reasonable position. Now White tries to force matters prematurely. **19.N-N5, P-KR3; 20.B-R7ch!? K-R1; 21.B-N1, B-K2; 22.N-K4, QR-B1; 23.Q-Q3?** Presumably an oversight. The battery looks threatening but never gets time to operate. **23. . .RxR; 24.RxR, QxP; 25.R-K1.** 25.R-B7 was the alternative but even then Black has a wide choice of strong combinations. **25. . .QxKP; 26.QxQP, B-N5; 27.R-K3, Q-Q4** forcing a winning ending. The rest is technique. **28.QxQ, BxQ; 29.N-B3, R-QB1; 30.N-K2, P-N4; 31.P-R4, K-N2; 32.PxP, PxP; 33.B-Q3, P-R4; 34.R-N3, K-B3; 35.R-N4, B-Q3; 36.K-B1, B-K4; 37.K-K1, R-KR1; 38.P-B4, PxP; 39.NxP, B-B3; 40.N-K2, R-R8ch; 41.K-Q2, R-R7; 42.P-N3, B-B6; 43.R-N8, R-N7; 44.K-K1, BxN; 45.BxB, RxP; 46.R-QR8** and now I sealed. . .B-B2 but Karpov resigned without resuming.

Aided by this and a superb win by John Nunn over Polugaevsky, England held the USSR to a 4-4 draw. Indeed, over the top 6 boards we won 4-2 and but for some superb defence from Petrosian would have won all the top 3 boards!

Problem 165

White to play. How should the game go? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked no later than 13 February.

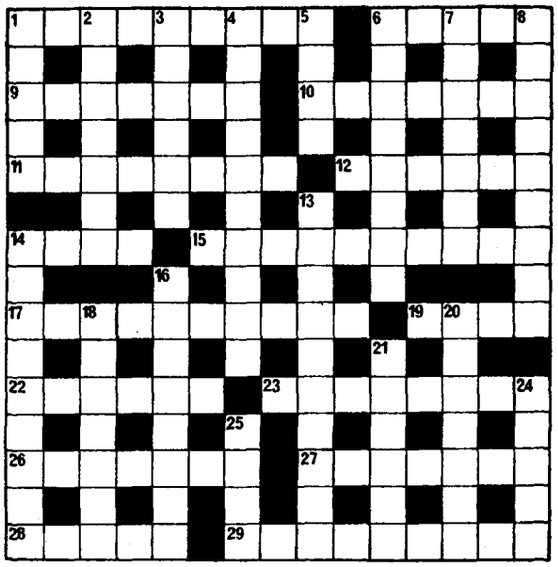


Solution to problem 163

Yes: 1.K-R6, R-K2; 2.B-N7, RxB; 3.P-N5!! R-R2 stalemate! or 3. . .R-N1; 4.KxP, R-KR1; 5.KxP drawing.

Weekend Crossword 1331

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1331, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 12 February.



ACROSS

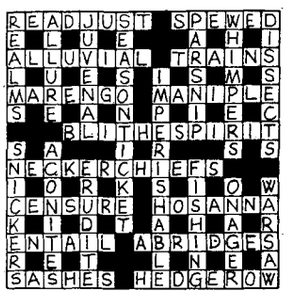
1 Plants something bogus in front of the stones (9).
6 Shaved and made the old man look sore (5).
9 Instrument which almost needs minding in middle of road (7).
10 Occasions for employing skill in cooking (7).
11 If mean fellows lose their heads first class quarrels are the result (8).
12 Food provided in nice realistic quantities (6).
14 So the monster is back (4).
15 A joke for country people about fifty (10).
17 Stupid people obstruct leading masters (10).
19 Sailor ever on watch? (4).
22 'O — time! O moments big as years!' (Keats) (6).
23 It takes a magician to flourish with nothing (8).
26 Complaint when translating fifty lines by saint (7).
27 Though fat I am prepared to be photographed on the commercial (7).
28 Grip in which the doctor holds artists (5).
29 One that burrows with an article behind a tree discovers a place for archaeological finds (9).

DOWN

1 As a philosopher, I enter an endless race (5).
2 Degrading, but it is some game going without immorality! (7).
3 Fruit is put in water (6).
4 Dejected, getting a man down (10).
5 Climbing resorts for simpletons (4).
6 Possibly near maps of an Italian town (8).
7 Clothes torn without a purpose (7).
8 Woman spread out and on show (9).
13 Strike about broken ladder? What nonsense! (10).
14 What the seaside may be like after putting me up and showing love (9).
16 Superficial and lacking variety to percolate (8).
18 Lamb on the hop turned heroine (7).
20 A different name put on a single flower (7).
21 Northerner goes east to take part in winter sports with a doctor (6).
24 Where a canoe would break up (5).
25 Mountain with nothing for animal to climb to (4).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No. 1330



Prizewinners to No. 1330

F. Henderson (Gloucester)
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Application forms can be obtained from: **The Administrative and Personnel Officer, The Labour Party, Transport House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3JA. Tel: 01-834 9434.** Applications should be returned by **Friday, 15 February 1980.** Previous applicants need not apply.

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CHINA IN THE WORLD TODAY Dayschool at the Mary Ward Centre, with talks and discussion. Sat. 9 Feb. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Fee £3. 9 Tavistock Place, London WC1. (near Euston Station).

ERITREA CULTURAL EVENING: 7 p.m. 1 February with songs, dances and food. Admission £1.50 and food £1. Eritrea Seminar on Saturday 2 February from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. with films and speakers recently returned from Eritrea. Admission 75p. Africa Centre, 38 King Street, WC2.

ADLERIAN SOCIETY. Demonstration of Parent Counselling by Dr Lilian Beattie, Senior Clinical Medical Officer. 7.30 p.m. Tuesday 5 February. Refreshments from 7.15. Community Rooms, Millman Street (East Side) WC1. Visitors welcome 50p (students 25p).

CENTRAL LONDON FABIAN SOCIETY. Peter Archer, Chairman of the Fabian Society in Committee Room No 5 House of Commons, Wednesday 6 Feb. 8 p.m. On the Fabian Contribution. Please note change of venue. All welcome.

ICA EVENTS, The Mall, SW1. 5 Feb. 7.30 p.m. Moholy-Nagy Talks: Penny Spark on 'The Legacy of Moholy-Nagy'. Tickets 80p. 930 3647.

YOUNG FABIANS, Anne Weyman, Hon. Sec. of the Socialist Medical Assoc. will speak on the National Health Service. Tues. 5 Feb. 7.30 p.m. LSE, Houghton St. WC2.

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THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Public Talk Sun. 3 Feb. 8 p.m. 'Occultism and its Laws'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

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